



ROYAL COMMISSION  
ON  
LABOUR IN INDIA.

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EVIDENCE.

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Vol. X.

BURMA.

LONDON :

PUBLISHED BY HIS MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE

To be purchased directly from H.M. STATIONERY OFFICE at the following addresses :

Astral House, Kingsway, London, W.C.2 ; 120, George Street, Edinburgh ;

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1931

Printed in India.

Price 7s. od. net.

X: 9.2-N29E

F 9.10.1 & 2

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#### NOTE TO PART 1.

In this part is reproduced the bulk of the evidence submitted to the Commission in the form of written memoranda in reply to the list of subjects circulated in August 1929. In preparing this volume the Commission have sought to retain all matter likely to be of permanent interest to students of the subject, and not available elsewhere. Material supplied to the Commission which has already been printed and published elsewhere has in general not been reproduced. Where memoranda have been abridged all considerable omissions have been indicated in the text.

### TERMS OF REFERENCE.

“ To inquire into and report on the existing conditions of labour in industrial undertakings and plantations in British India, on the health, efficiency and standard of living of the workers, and on the relations between employers and employed, and to make recommendations.”

NOTE.—“ Industrial undertaking ” for the purpose of the Commission is interpreted as in Article I of the Washington Hours Convention, which is as follows :—

“ For the purpose of this Convention, the term ‘ industrial undertaking ’ includes particularly :—

“ (a) Mines, quarries, and other works for the extraction of minerals from the earth.

“ (b) Industries in which articles are manufactured, altered, cleaned, repaired, ornamented, finished, adapted for sale, broken up or demolished, or in which materials are transformed ; including shipbuilding and the generation, transformation and transmission of electricity or motive power of any kind.

“ (c) Construction, reconstruction, maintenance, repair, alteration, or demolition of any building, railway, tramway, harbour, dock, pier, canal, inland waterway, road, tunnel, bridge, viaduct, sewer, drain, well, telegraphic or telephonic installation, electrical undertaking, gaswork, waterwork or other work of construction, as well as the preparation for or laying the foundations of any such work or structure.

“ (d) Transport of passengers or goods by road, rail, sea, or inland waterway, including the handling of goods at docks, quays, wharves or warehouses, but excluding transport by hand.”

\* \* \* \* \*

The competent authority in each country shall define the line of division which separates industry from commerce and agriculture.

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## LIST OF SUBJECTS.

## I. Recruitment.

- (1) *Origin of Labour.*
  - (i) Extent of migration.
  - (ii) Causes of particular streams of migration.
  - (iii) Changes in recent years.
- (2) *Contact with villages.*
  - (i) Extent and frequency of return.
  - (ii) Extent of permanent labour force.
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  - (ii) Possible improvement.
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  - (v) Application of International Conventions relating to un-employment.
- (8) *Labour "turnover."\**
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\* This word should be read as indicating generally the changes in composition of the labour staff of an undertaking.

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  - (iv) *Effects.*

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  - (ii) *By Government or other public agency.*
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59	Mrs. G. Martin Jones	} Representatives of the National Council of Women in Burma.	120—135	196—200, M.-2024.
60	Mrs. Fraser ..			
61	G. Guru Valu ..	Worker ..	..	201—202, M.-2074.
62	Penti Sahib ..	Gang maistry	..	202—203, M.-2085.
63	Naraini ..	} Stevedore worker.	..	203—204, M.-2099.
64	Mr. J. R. D. Glascott, C.I.E.	} Agent ..	} Vol. VIII, 1—358.	205—221, M.-2119.
65	Dr. P. C. Hayne ..	} Chief Medical Officer.		
66	Ma Ohu Sein ..	} Woman candle packer.	..	222—223, M.-2334.
67	Surdu Ajam ..	} Indian male candle packer	..	223, M.-2345.
68	Bhagelu ..	} Candle box maker.	..	223—224, M.-2351.
69	Mr. J. C. Hope ..	} Acting Works Manager.	} 36—68	224—232, M.-2357.
70	Mr. T. B. Gibson ..	} Acting. General Manager.		
71	Mr. H. McIntosh ..	} Chief Works Assistant.		
72	Mr. E. M. Shelverton	} Labour Welfare Superintendent.		
73	Mr. A. B. Mallett ..	} Assistant Manager.	} 31—33	233—243, M.-2475.
74	Mr. J. C. Treleaven	} Cargo Superintendent.		
75	Mr. W. T. Henry ..	} Manager	} 33—35	243—251, M.-2587.
76	Mr. Thomas Cormack	} Assistant Manager		
77	U Ba Si ..	} Representatives of the Burmese Labour Bureau, Rangoon.	166—169	252—262, M.-2685.
78	U Tun We ..			

Serial No.	Name.	Designation and/or address of witness.	Part I. (Written evidence) pages.	Part II (Oral evidence) pages and Nos. of the first questions of the series.
79	Mr. Thaver ..	One of the proprietors.	..	263—270, M-2800.
80	Mr. Mani Iyer ..	Head Clerk.		
81	Mr. H. L. Nichols, I.C.S.	Revenue Secretary.		
82	Mr. B. W. Swithinbank, I.C.S.	Secretary, Dept. of Local Self Government.		
83	Mr. A. J. Page, I.C.S.	Director of Statistics and Labour Commissioner.	1—27	270—299, M-2924.
84	Lt.-Col. G. G. Jolly, I.M.S.	Director of Public Health.		
85	Mr. W. H. C. Priedeaux, A.M.I.E.E.	Chief Inspector of factories.		
86	Mr. L. A. Havelock	Offg. Excise Commissioner.		
87	Mr. J. A. Cherry, C.I.E.	Chairman, Commissioners for the Port of Rangoon.	} 104—166	300—317, M-3249.
88	Mr. E. J. B. Jeffery	Traffic Manager, Port of Rangoon.		
89	Mr. C. A. Snow, M.A., I.E.S.	Director of Public Instruction, Burma.	28—29	..
90	The Private Medical Practitioners' Association.	Rangoon .. ..	157—161	..
91	U kin Maung Gyi	Bar-at-Law, Yenangyaung..	170	
92	Mr. K. V. V. Iyer ..	Telegu Investigator, Labour Commissioner's Office, Rangoon.	171	
		(Note received from Messrs. Steel Bros. containing the views of the Rice Millers on Mr. Iyer's Memorandum).	171—173	

**Volume X.**

**Part I.**

## GOVERNMENT OF BURMA.

### I.—Recruitment.

1. *Mr. A. J. Page, Labour Statistics Officer, Burma.*—The labour force in Burma is drawn from a very wide field. Representatives of nearly all the races of the neighbouring countries may be found employed side by side with the indigenous people. The following figures, though somewhat out of date as they were taken at a special industrial census in 1921, give a rough idea of the distribution of the labour force according to race and skill:—

*Number of Labourers in Industrial Establishments employing ten or more persons.*

Race.	Number of Labourers.		
	Skilled.	Unskilled.	Total.
European and Anglo-Indian .. ..	421	170	591
Chinese and Japanese .. ..	1,545	3,158	4,703
Home races .. ..	8,048	19,985	28,033
Indians .. ..	12,533	61,983	74,516
Total .. ..	22,547	85,296	107,843

A more modern sample of the distribution may be given from the record of some dockyard figures supplied in 1927.

#### DALLA DOCKYARD.

*Strength of Labour employed.*

Race.	Skilled.	Unskilled.	
		Direct.	Contract.
Anglo-Indians .. ..	14	..	..
Burmans .. ..	812	..	..
Chinamen .. ..	126	..	35
Chittagonians .. ..	216	..	40
Telugus .. ..	187	808	415
Tamils .. ..	9	..	..
Uriyas .. ..	461	8	228
Other Indians .. ..	144	113	52
Total .. ..	1,969	929	770

It may also be of interest to show, by races, the occupations of the skilled workers in this dockyard list. They were as follows:—

Chinese .. ..	Boilermakers, Carpenters, Electricians.
Burmese .. ..	Carpenters, Electricians, Platers.
Uriyas .. ..	Platers, Vicemen, Iron Caulkers, Iron Drillers, Platers, Machinemen.
Punjabis .. ..	Blacksmiths, Vicemen.
Bengalis .. ..	Platers, Machinemen.
Hindus .. ..	Blacksmiths.
Chittagonians .. ..	Riveters, Engine Tindals.
Telugus .. ..	Painters.
Tamils .. ..	Coremakers.

As regards unskilled labourer, shipping and wharf coolies are all Telugus mostly from the Godavari and Kistna Districts whilst the Uriya and Telugu paddy carriers employed in the rice mills come from the Ganjam and Vizagapatam Districts of the Madras Presidency. The coolies

employed on cargo boats who are recruited locally are mostly Telugus from Coromandel ports. For landing coal from the boats Tamils and Uriyas are ordinarily employed. They are recruited from India whereas the coolies employed in landing salt are usually Telugus recruited locally. The coolies employed by the Rangoon Corporation, about 5,000 in number are mostly Telugus. So too are the rickshaw pullers, who recently were estimated to be over 8,000 strong, their original habitat being mainly Vizagapatam though some come from Nellore. Sampanwallahs who in Rangoon alone number nearly 5,000 are all Chittagonians. They may be found pursuing the same occupation over all the waterways of the province though in Upper Burma Burmans to a large extent compete with them.

Of other races so far not mentioned, note may be made of the Maingthas who come in across country from China to work in the Ruby Mines in Mogok and to do other unskilled labour in that part of the world or the neighbouring Shan States and also of the Curkhas who are attracted by work in the Burma Corporation's Mines at Namtu.

*Dock Labourers.*—Except rice and timber which are brought in cargo boats from the mills to the steamers all important exports find their way into the steamers through the wharves. The goods are moved from the Port Commissioners' godowns to the crane at the wharf head and attached to the sling by the coolies employed by their labour contractor. In the case of rice and timber the mill enters into a contract with a cargo boat owner for the supply of the necessary boats, and the boats are loaded by the coolies on the mill establishments. On arrival alongside the ship the crew of the boat fastens the goods on to the sling coming down from the ship and there their duty ends. The work of lifting the cargo from the wharf or cargo boat, as the case may be, lowering it into the ship and packing it in the hold, is done by the stevedore coolies.

As regards imports all cargo other than coal and salt is discharged from steamers on to the wharf head. This is done by the stevedore coolies. The cargo is then moved into the Port Commissioners' godowns by the coolies employed by their labour contractor. Coal and salt are handled in a different manner and the work is done by a separate set of coolies.

Dock labour in Rangoon has therefore been taken to include stevedore coolies, wharf coolies, cargo boatmen and coal and salt coolies and is discussed separately under these heads.

*Stevedore Coolies.*—All the shipping companies, except the British India Steam Navigation Company, enter into a contract with a stevedore for the proper storage in the hold or the discharge out of it of the cargo carried by their steamers. The stevedore obtains his labour requirements through his head maistry who is in some cases on a contract with him. The British India Steam Navigation Company, on the other hand, have a Cargo Superintendent who does this work and he is given a head maistry and a labour clerk on fixed salaries.

Stevedore coolies work in gangs, the strength of each gang varying with the commodity handled. Ordinarily, there is one gang for each hatch, made up as follows:—

Gang Maistry	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Winchmen	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
Kamalis*	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4
Coolies	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	14†

The rates usually paid by the stevedores to the head maistry are:—

			Rs.	A.	P.	Rs.	A.	P.		
Winchmen	..	..	From	2	2	0	to	2	4	0 per shift.
Kamalis	..	..	..	2	12	0	..	2	13	0 per shift.‡
Coolies	..	..	..	1	8	6	..	1	9	0 per shift.

Except in one firm of stevedores head maistries are not paid anything by the stevedores. They usually make deductions of one anna per head from the rates given them by the stevedores. But where coolies are paid Rs. 1-3-6 per shift a deduction of only half an anna is made. These are the main sources of the head maistry's income.

Except in the Cargo Department of the British India Steam Navigation Company where he is paid a daily wage of Rs. 1-13-0 the gang maistry is treated as a coolie in respect of wage.

But there is a custom whereby the number of coolies actually working in a gang is one short of the number ordered by the stevedore, and the wages of this coolie are also taken by the gang maistry. Except in the case of the British India Steam Navigation Company, where gang maistries and winchmen are paid direct by the Cargo Superintendent, payment of wages is made to the head maistry who distributes them to the gang maistries, winchmen and kamalis. The gang maistry distributes the wages to the coolies.

\*Kamalis are coolies skilled in packing cargo.

†In the case of some of the smaller steamers the number of coolies is usually 12.

‡The British India Steam Navigation Company's rate is Rs. 1-13-0 as their steamers have short voyages and experienced kamalis are not required.

Stevadore gangs work in shifts, one from 6 or 7 A.M. to 5 P.M. and the other from 6 or 7 P.M. to 5 A.M., i.e., from 10 to 11 hours a day. The work goes on without any break, the operatives taking a short time off by turn for refreshments, etc. The demand for stevedore labour is not uniform, the busy season being from January to April when there is a heavy export trade in rice. The other exports and imports provide more or less uniform work to the stevedores throughout the year. A stevedore coolie works on an average about 4 or 5 days a week. The number of coolies engaged in stevedoring is between 3,000 and 4,000, the majority of whom are Telugus from the Godavari and Kistna Districts of the Madras Presidency.

*Wharf Coolies.*—As explained already the labourers dealt with in this paragraph are on the establishment of the labour contractor employed by the Port Commissioners and work in conjunction with the stevedore coolies. The contractor is under an agreement with the Port Commissioners for the performance of the work of loading and unloading seagoing ships at their wharves and jetties. Payment to the contractor is made on the basis of the tonnage of cargoes landed and shipped by his agency. He employs for the purpose 16 permanent gangs of 15 men each including the maistry. The maistries are paid Rs. 40 per mensem and the coolies Rs. 30 to Rs. 35. Besides these 240 labourers he has about 60 gangs of similar composition who are engaged when required. In these gangs the maistries are paid Rs. 3 per day, and the coolies Rs. 1-8-0 per day. All these wharf coolies are Telugus, most of them coming from the Godavari and Kistna Districts of the Madras Presidency but a few come also from the Vizagapatam District.

Stevadore and wharf coolies are recruited locally. Normally no advances are given, but small amounts are paid in advance to gang maistries in the busy rice milling season with the object of obtaining a hold on them. These advances are recovered from their bills.

*Cargo Boatmen.*—In 1927 the number of cargo boats registered was 770 and the crew prescribed for these on the basis of tonnage capacity was 6,432. But very few, if any, cargo boats have their full complement. As a rule cargo boats contain about three-quarters of the number for which the owner pays, the wages of the absent men being shared by the tindal and his assistants. Taking this into consideration, the number of men employed in cargo boats in Rangoon may be estimated at 4,800. They are mostly Telugus from Coromandel ports and are recruited locally. During the busy season—January to February or March—tindals are usually paid Rs. 25 and the crew Rs. 18 per mensem, and for the rest of the year Rs. 20 and Rs. 14 respectively.

*Coal and Salt Coolies.*—Coal and salt work is included in the contracts entered into by the shipping companies with the stevedore. The latter obtains his supply of labour from a maistry whom he pays at so much per ton handled. This maistry is different from the stevedore's head maistry.

When coal is discharged, from 14 to 20 men (Tamils) are employed at each hatch. The two winchmen and the foreman are paid by the maistry a daily wage between Rs. 2-4-0 to Rs. 3 each. Ten or twelve men stay in the hold filling the tubs, while two stand at the edge of the steamer and pour the contents of the tub into the boat. These men are given Rs. 2 each per day.

For shifting coal from the hold to the bunker, boys are usually employed as the low roof of the hold does not admit of grown-up adults moving about with ease. These boys are usually paid a rupee each per day while the men who trim the coal in the bunker receive Rs. 2 each per day.

Salt is discharged in the same way as coal except that each tub is weighed before the contents leave the ship. In addition to the foreman and winchmen between 25 and 30 men are employed at each hatch. They are usually Telugus and are paid Rs. 1-8-0 a day. There is no change in the personnel or wage of the foreman and winchmen, whether coal or salt is handled, as the same maistry does the work in both cases.

The operations connected with the transport of coal or salt between the steamer and the depots or godowns on the shore are carried out by a boat owner who enters into a contract with the importers for the purpose. For landing coal from the boats, Tamils and Uriyas are ordinarily employed. They are usually recruited from India and the methods of payment adopted are very similar to those described in the case of paddy carriers in rice mills. The salt coolies, on the other hand, are usually Telugus and are recruited locally. They are paid at daily rates which vary from Re. 1 to Rs. 1-8-0. The number of men engaged in handling coal (including those at discharging and bunkering coal) is about 2,000 of whom two-thirds are Tamils and the rest Uriyas.

*Mines.*—*Mr. T. Couper, I.C.S., Financial Commissioner, Reserved Subjects, Burma.*—Mechanics and skilled labourers in the mines in Burma are imported from Rangoon and India. Unskilled labour is for the most part Indian, but is recruited in general in the neighbourhood of the mine. The Namtu-Bawdwin mine to which the Chief Inspector of Mines refers at page 6 in his Report for 1927, employs Yunnanese and Gurkhas and Maingthas are employed in the Ruby Mines. In Tavoy and Mergui the workers are mostly Chinese and Indian, the Chinese being the more numerous. In some mines a few Uriyas are imported from India. Two stone

quarries in Toungoo and one in Thaton are worked by convict labour and ticket-of-leave prisoners.

1. (i) *Mr. A. J. Page, I.C.S., Labour Statistics Officer, Burma.*—The following table gives the number of Immigrants and Emigrants to and from Burma in the last 24 years :—

Year.	Emigrants from		Immigrants into	
	Rangoon.	Burma (including Rangoon).	Rangoon.	Burma (including Rangoon).
1905 .. .. .	124,631	175,703	185,579	238,540
1906 .. .. .	246,968	319,834	291,741	360,552
1907 .. .. .	226,966	267,612	269,701	271,132
1908 .. .. .	227,568	301,059	252,075	319,271
1909 .. .. .	253,349	327,586	259,462	328,143
1910 .. .. .	217,111	298,613	268,107	331,170
1911 .. .. .	221,981	311,574	289,445	368,383
1912 .. .. .	240,917	331,520	256,985	327,582
1913 .. .. .	271,687	355,397	313,039	380,216
1914 .. .. .	73,242	146,285	216,841	268,416
1915 .. .. .	198,715	249,076	291,968	338,890
1916 .. .. .	200,898	252,348	229,159	259,578
1917 .. .. .	216,910	237,184	206,789	223,133
1918 .. .. .	206,280	234,237	238,138	259,922
1919 .. .. .	200,646	219,087	271,453	284,779
1920 .. .. .	217,212	247,985	316,837	341,180
1921 .. .. .	266,892	303,806	306,432	331,992
1922 .. .. .	266,398	310,331	320,606	360,038
1923 .. .. .	243,886	295,320	342,161	382,724
1924 .. .. .	265,354	315,833	347,401	388,205
1925 .. .. .	301,896	350,974	330,212	372,733
1926 .. .. .	292,394	342,597	370,034	408,464
1927 .. .. .	311,895	361,291	386,992	428,343
1928 .. .. .	291,162	333,006	385,623	418,698

Excluding the war years 1914 to 1919 these figures show an average yearly excess of immigrants over emigrants of 44,851 or roughly 45,000. This large excess is not reflected in the census figures as shown in the following table calculated by Mr. Grantham in the 1921 Census Report :—

Census.	Indians in Burma (nearest whole thousand).			Percentage of females to total population.
	Persons.	Males.	Females.	
1921 .. .. .	887	654	233	26.27
1911 .. .. .	745	558	187	25.10
1901 .. .. .	590	442	148	25.08

It will be seen that the average yearly increase between 1901 and 1921 is about 15,000. The other 30,000 must be written off against the death rate which on the central figure in 1911 of about 750,000 would be 40 per thousand of the Indian population, a not unlikely figure.

The migration table given above relates solely to transit by sea and does not take into account migrations over the land borders. Of these perhaps the largest is the seasonal human ebb and flow between Chittagong and Arakan but as this is largely for agricultural purposes it is not relevant to our present subject. A small proportion of these immigrants is of course industrial, finding employment during the busy season in the Akyab rice mills.

2. (i) *Mr. A. J. Page, I.C.S., Labour Statistics Officer, Burma.*—No statistical information is available on this head. Even if enquiries were made by questioning returning coolies on the wharf it would be difficult to obtain reliable figures relating only to industrial workers for the coolies may have been engaged for the season in Burma on industrial work and may be returning

to their homes to do the seasonal agricultural work in their own homes. Or they may have been engaged partly on agricultural work and partly on industrial work in Burma, passing from the one to the other as the demands for labour required. Bearing in mind this impossibility of distinguishing between the supply of agricultural and of industrial labour we may quote Mr. Bennison who writes: \* " November and December are the heaviest months for immigrant traffic and March, April and May the heaviest for emigrant traffic. The majority of Indian labourers come to Burma because of economic pressure, a bad harvest in Madras being usually followed by a heavy influx of immigrants. The labourers who come in November and December do not ordinarily go back in the ensuing April-May. Their object in coming to Burma is to save as much as possible and as a rule they stay for two or three years or for even longer periods before going back."

(ii) The only information we have under this head is such as may be extracted from the Imperial Tables XXII in the Burma Census Report relating to the Special Industrial Census held in 1921. From that source we find that of 67,668 male and female skilled and unskilled labourers from outside Burma only 3,116 returned themselves as permanent residents in Burma. Though this is no indication of the extent of the permanent labour force in Burma it is interesting as showing what a small proportion of that force in 1921 recruited from outside the province looked upon Burma as its final home.

Part II of the same table shows that 19,347 labourers in certain selected industries out of 97,199 belonged to the home races. If to this 20 per cent. we add another 10 for persons of non-Burman origin who can be considered as settled in the country we may take the permanent labour force in the country as not more than 30 per cent. of the whole labour force.

3. *Mr. A. J. Page, I.C.S., Labour Statistics Officer, Burma.*—The following extract from Mr. Bennison's report (paragraph 182 ff) which refers specifically to the supply of unskilled labour in rice mills may be taken as typical of the methods usually employed in all industries in Burma where the system of maistry or contract labour prevails:—

"The general practice in all rice mills of any size is for the employer to enter into a contract with a maistry for the supply of unskilled labour for the various operations carried on from the point at which paddy arrives at the mill to the point at which rice is shipped into cargo boats for export. In most contracts no mention is made of the number of workmen required: the maistry agrees to supply sufficient labour as and when required day or night at the piece rates laid down in the contract. A sum of money usually between Rs. 3,000 and Rs. 5,000 is always deposited by the maistry with the firm as security for the due performance of his duties under the contract, and this deposit is liable to be forfeited if the maistry fails to discharge his obligation. In some cases the person who obtains the contract does not carry out any part of the work himself, but gives it out to another contractor. This sub-contractor has, of course, to pay a substantial sum for obtaining the work. The existence of this sub-contractor may not be known to the employer who deals only with the person who signs his contract.

The person who arranges for the supply of the labour at the mill is generally known as the head maistry. In most mills the bag carriers are recruited, paid and supervised by the head maistry himself, but in the case of the other coolies this is usually done by sub-maistries. Sometimes a head maistry may have a few of his own paddy carriers, and very occasionally there are sub-maistries for the bag carriers. The head maistry is ordinarily paid a premium by each of the sub-maistries in charge of bagging and stitching for the privilege of getting the work. In a mill which runs for the greater part of the year and where the outturn is fairly large, this premium may be as much as Rs. 500 per year. No such payment is made by the sub-maistries in charge of paddy carriers.

Most of the paddy carriers are recruited in India. The sub-maistries either themselves go to India or send their agents there about October to negotiate with prospective recruits. These recruits are generally well-known to the sub-maistries and are often residents of the same or a neighbouring village. Advances are paid to them, and with this advance the recruit may pay off any small debt outstanding; he also leaves a certain amount with his family to cover their maintenance charges for some weeks. The recruits are then brought to Rangoon by the sub-maistries or their agents who bear all the expenses for the journey. On arrival in the mill the recruits are usually made to sign their names or give their thumb impressions on a printed form of agreement or on a piece of blank paper. The amount is afterwards entered by the maistries. Sometimes they are made to sign promissory notes for sums never less than the total amount spent on them.

In addition to the men recruited in India a fairly large number of paddy carriers is recruited locally. These coolies have usually come to Rangoon independently of the maistries. They divide themselves into gangs each of which nominates a leader from among its members and they visit the mills just before they begin to get busy, see the head maistry and come to an understanding with him about the wages to be paid. They usually remain in the mill during the busy months only and are ordinarily given what is known as *backsheesh*. This *backsheesh* which is first

\*Report of an enquiry into the Standard and Cost of Living of the Working Classes in Rangoon, by J. J. Bennison, I.C.S., 1928, paragraph 237.

given as a loan is eventually treated as a gift if the men receiving it serve under the head maistry until the close of the busy season. The head maistry holds the leader responsible for all his men.

Apart from these two classes of paddy carriers who are paid at piece rates a few coolies are sometimes obtained locally by the head maistry and paid at daily rates. This usually happens only when the mill is very busy and the number so employed is ordinarily very small."

The abuses to which this maistry system gives rise are many, the main fault being that so much of what the labourer should receive goes into the pockets of middlemen. For the same reason the system is expensive to the employers but so long as the demand for labour is so highly seasonal—and it is doubtful whether in Rangoon it can ever be otherwise—it is difficult to see how any other system such as a public employment agency is going to solve the problem.

4. *Mr. A. J. Page, I.C.S., Labour Statistics Officer, Burma.*—Here again we may quote Mr. Bennison (paragraph 241):—

"Most of the married Indian labourers who come to Burma leave their wives and families in India. They naturally do not want to be bothered with their wives and children in a new country where they are not certain of obtaining work and where they do not intend to reside permanently. There is also the caste prejudice against travelling by sea which is particularly strong with Uriyas. Then there is the difficulty of finding suitable accommodation since married quarters are ordinarily not provided in factories and rents in the town are very high. The ratio of males to females (all classes) at the 1921 Census varied from about 2 : 1 in the case of Tamils to about 40 : 1 for Chittagonians. Tamils do not appear to be so strict regarding their caste as the other Indian races. The majority of Indian labourers have therefore practically no home life during their sojourn in Burma and this is apparently largely responsible for many of their vices here. The presence of a large number of men living away from their families gives rise to traffic in women and prostitution. In the absence of their families they take more readily to drinking and to a certain extent to opium eating also."

5. *Mr. A. J. Page, I.C.S., Labour Statistics Officer, Burma.*—The regular lines of steamers such as the Bibby and Henderson lines recruit their men from Chittagong, crews which have signed on in Rangoon for a given period being paid off and repatriated on their return to that port. At the same time new crews are brought down from Chittagong to take the places of those who have left.

A certain amount of recruiting for other steamship lines takes place in Rangoon mostly amongst Chittagonian sampanwallahs and men of the same race. These lines are said to keep their agents to do this recruiting work but the number of men involved must be small and the whole matter as far as Rangoon is concerned calls for no special comment.

7. (i) *Mr. A. J. Page, I.C.S., Labour Statistics Officer, Burma.*—No statistics are available regarding the extent of unemployment in Burma. A certain amount exists as may be seen by the numbers of coolies hanging round bazaars and such places in the hope of picking up odd jobs. It is possible that there is relatively more unemployment amongst persons of higher grades many of whom have drifted across to Rangoon from Calcutta, Madras and other large centres in the hope of finding work in Burma.

7. (v) *Application of International Conventions relating to Unemployment.*—Nothing in this respect has been done in Burma.

## II.—Staff Organization.

*Mr. A. J. Page, I.C.S., Labour Statistics Officer, Burma.*—Apart from what has already been said about maistries or contractors under head I—Recruitment, no other official information is available under this head.

The questions involved are such as can be answered more appropriately by representatives of the commercial world.

## III.—Housing.

*Mr. A. J. Page, I.C.S., Labour Statistics Officer, Burma.*—In the large mills and factories in Rangoon some sort of housing accommodation is usually provided for the majority of workers but in the smaller mills and factories housing is either not provided at all or, if provided, can accommodate only a very small proportion. The accommodation provided is usually in the form of barracks which are suitable only for single men. In most of the rice mills married workers are employed but in practically all of them married quarters are not provided. These families put up improvised gunny, plank or mat partitions for purpose of privacy. Not having been provided for in the original plans as passed by the Buildings Department of the Corporation, they are often objected to by the Corporation authorities.

The Indian working classes who are not provided with quarters by employers usually obtain accommodation in the buildings registered in the Municipal books as lodging houses. It is not unusual to find a tenement room 12½' × 40' occupied by as many as 40 or 50 people. The practice is for the room to be taken out by a maistry at a fixed rent and with a view to making as

much profit as possible he crams it with as many coolies as it will hold. In some rooms there are two sets of tenants one set occupying it during the day and the other during the night. Families are often found in these lodging houses, gunny-bag partitions being erected to secure a certain amount of privacy. In the dry season the men usually sleep on the footpaths and pavements and use the rooms only for cooking food and for storing their belongings—usually a dealwood box. But during the rains they crowd into these lodging houses until there is hardly an inch of space left either inside the room or outside on the stairs. In view of its important bearing on the general health of the city this matter has recently been investigated and reported on by a Special Committee appointed by the Local Government to enquire into the Public Health of Rangoon, and some of their recommendations in this connection which might be found to be of some interest are summarized below :—

(1) That all employers, whether commercial bodies or public bodies, should provide their permanent labour force with suitable accommodation of an approved type. Insanitary cooly barracks should be condemned.

(2) The lodging houses accommodating casual and temporary labour should no longer be permitted in that part of Rangoon between Godwin Road and Judah Ezekiel Street, and that the construction of workmen's chawls in suitable sewered localities should be undertaken.

(3) That a rest-house to accommodate 5,000 should be erected on the foreshore for labourers disembarking in Rangoon, and proceeding up-country, or returning from the mofussil for embarkation in Rangoon.

In connection with an enquiry made in 1926 at the instance of the international Labour Office as to the nature and extent of welfare work performed by employers, information regarding housing accommodation provided by them was received from 297 establishments in the Province. Out of 91,984 workers employed in these establishments, 53,887 workers were provided with housing accommodation. Practically all the quarters were rent-free, but the Burma Railways, which had quarters for 2,892 workers at Insein, Mahlwagon and Myitnge, let them free of rent only to workers drawing under Re. 1 per diem or Rs. 25 per mensem, others being charged a favourable rent.

*Mines.*—*Mr. T. Couper, I.C.S., Financial Commissioner, Reserved Subject, Burma.*—Labourers are usually supplied with free quarters. Housing accommodation on the whole is not unsatisfactory. In the Tavoy District overcrowding in the labour camps prevails.

*Housing for Dock Labourers.*—*Mr. A. J. Page, I.C.S., Labour Statistics Officer, Burma.*—The Labour Contractor of the Port Commissioners, it is understood, provides housing for a proportion of the labour force employed by him. The floating population of Indian coolies who are not provided by employers usually obtain accommodation in the buildings registered in the Municipal books as lodging houses. It is not unusual to find a tenement room 12½' x 40' occupied by as many as 40 or 50 people. The practice is for the room to be taken out by a maistry at a fixed rent and with a view to making as much profit as possible he crams it with as many coolies as it will hold. In some rooms there are two sets of tenants, one set occupying it during the day and the other during the night. Families are often found in these lodging houses, gunny-bag partitions being erected to secure a certain amount of privacy. In the dry season the men usually sleep on the footpaths and pavements and use the rooms only for cooking food and for storing their belongings—usually a dealwood box. But during the rains they crowd into these lodging houses until there is hardly an inch of space left either inside the room or outside on the stairs.

16. *Mr. W. H. C. Prideaux, Chief Inspector of Factories, Burma.*—The Indian Factories Act does not lay upon the employer the duty of providing housing accommodation for his work-people. In spite of this the great majority do provide accommodation and the more enlightened ones have erected very satisfactory houses. Where, however, the employers have erected unsatisfactory lines it is extremely difficult to bring pressure to bear on them as if a standard of housing is asked for which they are unwilling to provide they always have the alternative of providing nothing at all. It is difficult to keep the accommodation provided in a satisfactorily sanitary condition; the occupants are often not clean in their habits.

The cooly barracks are so different in type to the houses to which the work-people are accustomed that some prefer to live away from the factory in huts erected by themselves. This is particularly the case with men who have a family as the accommodation provided by the mills is generally only suitable for single men.

The quarters consist generally of lines, i.e., long buildings divided up into rooms, each room accommodating several men. Both single and two-storeyed buildings are in use and there is generally a verandah in front. This is necessary in the case of two-storeyed buildings as the stairs are placed at the ends of the verandah and this is the only means of access to the central rooms. The buildings are generally of wood with corrugated iron roofs, but thatched roofs are also in common use up-country and buildings entirely made of corrugated iron are also to be found. In the dry zone, huts of mat and thatch take the place of the wood or iron, general in Lower Burma.

(i) *Lieutenant-Colonel G. G. Jolly, I.M.S., Director of Public Health, Burma.*—In Rangoon most of the large employers of labour provide accommodation for their permanent employees. Temporary employees, if taken on in the busy season, and casual labour have to find shelter in

lodging houses. In Yenangyaung, Syriam and Namtu housing accommodation is provided by the employers.

(ii) The Rangoon Port Commissioners, the Rangoon Corporation and the Burma Railways provide quarters for a considerable number, at all events, of their permanent employees.

(iii) *Lieutenant-Colonel G. G. Jolly, I.M.S., Director of Public Health, Burma.*—According to the Annual Public Health Report of the Health Officer, Rangoon Corporation, for the year 1928, the number of registered lodging houses on the 31st December 1928 was 1,459 and the number of persons permitted to live in these lodging houses was 71,180.

18. *Lieutenant-Colonel G. G. Jolly, I.M.S., Director of Public Health, Burma.*—Cooly barracks provided by the larger employers of labour and by Government and other public bodies are often quite good, although in many instances this cannot be said, more especially where back to back rooms exist, *vide* Rangoon Health Enquiry Committee's Report,\* paragraph 71.

Lodging houses for coolies owned by private landlords are very bad indeed and could hardly be worse—*vide* Rangoon Health Enquiry Committee's Report, paragraph 74. The number of coolies occupying this accommodation was estimated by the Rangoon Health Enquiry Committee at about 100,000.

20 and 21. *Mr. A. J. Page, I.C.S., Labour Statistics Officer, Burma.*—As regards rent rates in various classes and problems connected with subletting it may be of interest to mention that a Committee appointed by the Local Government is at present engaged upon an enquiry into the effects of the removal in Rangoon of rent control which was introduced as a temporary post-war measure and ceased to exist at the end of 1926. It is expected that facts may emerge which will be of value to the Commission with regard to housing problems and as the labours of the Committee are not likely to extend for more than three or four months their findings should be available for the Commission well in advance of their visit to Burma.

#### IV.—Health.

23 (i) and (ii). *Lieutenant-Colonel G. G. Jolly, I.M.S., Director of Public Health, Burma.*—Unfortunately, we have no separate statistics indicating the health conditions of workers in industrial undertakings (as defined in enclosure No. 1) apart from the general population. Thus it is impossible to illustrate the conditions by means of figures of mortality and morbidity. The only exception to this is the railway workers. The birth-rate and death-rate of railway workers resident within railway limits outside municipal areas in Burma compared with the figures for the whole province are given in the table below which shows the average figures for the past five years:—

*Average of the years 1924—1928.*

	Population.	Birth-rate.	Death-rate.
Whole Province .. .. .	10,822,618	26·26	20·41
Railway Colony .. .. .	7,066	22·07	9·87

Unfortunately the population living within railway limits is so small that the figures are of little statistical value.

There are certain towns in Burma which may be regarded as industrial towns, the four principal being Syriam, Yenangyaung, Chauk and Myitnge, while Rangoon is partly an industrial town. The table below shows the vital statistics of these towns compared with the corresponding urban figures for the province, the mean of the last five years being given in each case:—

	Population.	Birth-rate.	Death-rate.	Infant mortality.
Province Urban .. .. .	1,240,022	28·09	37·09	303·43
Rangoon .. .. .	345,505	20·28	33·92	331·89
Syriam .. .. .	15,193	19·48	24·17	213·94
Yenangyaung .. .. .	9,515	37·04	47·80	308·72
Chauk .. .. .	5,617	13·00	48·42	712·33
Myitnge .. .. .	3,439	37·92	36·23	341·58

The figures given are the crude recorded rates which would require to be corrected for age and sex distribution if a just comparison is to be made.

\*Report on the Public Health of Rangoon, 1927, Volume I.

A statement showing the population and death rates of labourers employed by the Port Commissioners during the last five years is furnished below :—

Year.					Population.	No. of deaths.	Death-rate per 1,000.	Infant mortality.
1923-24	..	..	..	..	4,087	4	·9	Nil
1924-25	..	..	..	..	3,174	9	2·8	Nil
1925-26	..	..	..	..	3,423	11	3·2	Nil
1926-27	..	..	..	..	3,876	10	2·6	Nil
1927-28	..	..	..	..	3,419	7	2·05	Nil

(iii) Working conditions both at work places and at home vary so enormously that no useful purpose would be served by attempting to describe them in detail.

*At work places.*—Mr. W. H. C. Prideaux, Chief Inspector of Factories, Burma.—The working conditions vary greatly in the different industries. In the rice mills there is considerable dust formed in two of the operations, (1) hopping and its ancillary processes, and (2) polishing. The paddy arrives at the mill either by boat or by rail and it is measured before being conveyed in baskets to the godowns. From the godowns it has again to be carried in baskets to the hopper. Considerable dust is given off while the paddy is being handled but although it makes the work unpleasant there seems to be no medical evidence that the dust is harmful. In the polishing process meal dust is given off which does not appear to be injurious although during the dry weather it probably increases the fire hazard in rice mills. In many modern mills the polishing cones are enclosed. The saw mills are sheds open on at least three sides to the open air and are healthy work places. At the cotton ginning factories the kappas is picked over in sheds or in the open air. In the latter case the workers generally erect mat shelters to protect themselves from the sun. In the oil refineries the workmen in the paraffin wax sweating rooms have to work in rather high temperatures as do also men setting bricks in continuous kilns.

(iv) Lieutenant-Colonel G. G. Jolly, I.M.S., Director of Public Health, Burma.—This again varies enormously. Detailed tables have been drawn up of the dietaries of the working classes of various races both indigenous and immigrant, and these tables will no doubt be presented to the Commission by the officers who have had them prepared, namely, Mr. Page and Mr. Bennison. A certain amount of work has been done in the Harcourt Butler Institute of Public Health on the food value of these dietaries and the results have been sent to Mr. Bennison and Mr. Andrews. Generally speaking, in my opinion, the dietary of the Burman labourer is superior to that of the Indian who migrates to this province to seek work.

(v) Lieutenant-Colonel G. G. Jolly, I.M.S., Director of Public Health, Burma.—This varies greatly. Again I am of opinion that the physique of the Burman labourer is on the whole superior to that of the Indian immigrant, but there is very great variation among both classes. The absence of medical inspection of immigrant coolies in India before embarking for Burma is a matter of importance. Were such inspection carried out, the weaklings and the unfit prevented from embarking, and vaccination and inoculation against cholera carried out when necessary, we would have a good deal less sickness than we now have.

(vi) Lieutenant-Colonel G. G. Jolly, I.M.S., Director of Public Health, Burma.—In Industrial cities, we have a great excess of males owing to the fact that the Indian immigrant labourer seldom brings his woman with him. The figures in the case of the Port of Rangoon for male and female immigrants for each of the last five years are of interest in this connection and are given below :—

*Deck passengers from India entering Rangoon Port.*

				1924.	1925.	1926.	1927.	1928.
Male	..	..	..	298,373	282,987	316,426	326,948	327,130
Female	..	..	..	27,656	26,348	30,684	34,138	32,999

This very pronounced sex disparity leads of course to the establishment of prostitution on an extensive scale and to the consequent spread of venereal diseases.

26. *Mr. W. H. C. Prideaux, Chief Inspector of Factories, Burma.*—For factories the latrine accommodation that has to be provided is laid down in Rule 22 of the Burma Factories Rules. It may be required in mines under Chapter 1 of the Burma Mines Rules. Outside Rangoon no latrines are connected to a public drainage system and very few latrines have septic tanks. In the case of mills situated on the banks of creeks or rivers the latrines are generally over the water and this type of sewage disposal gives very little trouble. Elsewhere the pit system is in general use. The least satisfactory latrines are those provided with buckets and conserved by public sweepers. Even where latrines are provided and kept in a cleanly state they are frequently misused or not used.

*Lieutenant-Colonel G. G. Jolly, I.M.S., Director of Public Health, Burma.*—The large European firms employing labour are careful to provide adequate latrine accommodation and good water supply, but that firms of smaller industrial organizations are defective in this respect. Home latrine facilities in many of the coolie lodging houses in the larger towns are very inadequate.

27. (i) *Lieutenant-Colonel G. G. Jolly, I.M.S., Director of Public Health, Burma.*—The only special areas from the point of view of industrial undertakings in Burma that I am aware of are the Burma Corporation Concession in the Northern Shan States, the oil fields areas, the Syriam Municipality which is controlled by the Burma Oil Company, and Myitnge Municipality which is controlled by the Burma Railways. On the whole, it should be said that the sanitary supervision of such areas is distinctly better than that of the country at large.

(ii) Plantations in Burma exist mainly in the Tenasserim and Pegu Divisions. They are inspected from time to time by the District Health Officers and any defects existing are brought to notice in the reports of these officers. Generally speaking few defects have been reported.

28. The existing factory rules are in my opinion on the whole as satisfactory as can be expected in a province so backward in public health as Burma. The same applies to Mines Rules, but I would like to point out here that I have never even met the Inspector of Mines for Burma, who, I understand, is a Government of India official. I am not informed when he visits Burma and therefore have no opportunity of discussing his views on the sanitation and health conditions of mines. In my opinion the inspection of mines in Burma should be a provincial matter.

(i) The control of temperature in factories in Burma other than by natural ventilation has never, so far as I am aware, been attempted, and would be a difficult and costly matter. We have hitherto not arrived at any suitable standards. Short of Refrigeration Plants, little can be done to moderate temperature in factories, and after all temperature alone is a factor of lesser importance.

(ii) I am not aware what action has been taken to control humidification in cotton mills in Burma. In connection with the general question of ventilation and humidity in factories, I would refer to a series of Katathermometer readings carried out under my supervision at the Harcourt Butler Institute for a period of one year and published in the "Indian Medical Gazette" Vol. LXIV, page 319. These readings show the impossibility without great expense of producing anything approaching the "comfort standard" suggested by Leonard Hill for factories in England, but there can be little doubt that a "comfort standard" fixed for England is not applicable to the Tropics where each country must fix its own.

*Mr. W. H. C. Prideaux, Chief Inspector of Factories, Burma.*—The requirements relating to the sanitary condition of factories are contained in Rules 17 to 24 of the Burma Factories Rules, read with sections 9 to 14 of the Act and appear to be adequate for this province. There are no rules relating to artificial humidification and as there is only one spinning mill in Burma it has been considered unnecessary to formulate them. Actually records show that the mill referred to keeps well within the limits laid down by the Bombay Rules. Legislation to cover the question of temperature in factories generally has been considered but great practical difficulties stand in the way of any effective action. The suitability of the existing Mines Rules relating to health has no doubt been considered in the Central Government's memorandum but it may be suggested that a somewhat closer liaison between the Inspectors of Mines and the Provincial Health authorities would be advantageous. For example it is suggested that the Inspector of Mines when he comes to Burma should discuss matters connected with the sanitation of mines with the Director of Public Health and forward to him copies of those portions of his inspection notes that deal with sanitary or health matters for information.

29. *Lieutenant-Colonel G. G. Jolly, I.M.S., Director of Public Health, Burma.*—Very little industrial disease has come to my notice in Burma. Lead poisoning is the most important and in the year 1928 forty-five cases were reported from Namtu compared with 51 in 1927. Lead poisoning is also reported to occur among Burmese potters in Shwebo, Amherst and other districts. Two cases of Miners' Pthisis were reported from Namtu in 1928. A few cases of Dermatitis among mineral oil workers have been reported from Yenangyaung and Syriam, but this disease judging from reports is not of frequent occurrence.

30. *Mr. A. J. Page, I.C.S., Labour Statistics Officer, Burma.*—Over and above the great initial difficulties of introducing any modified scheme of sickness insurance into Burma, the Local Government is unable to finance any such scheme. It is left to the Labour Commission to explore the whole ground of sickness insurance.

In view of this financial *impasse* it would appear at this stage to be a waste of time and labour discussing the question further.

31. *Lieutenant-Colonel G. G. Jolly, I. M. S., Director of Public Health, Burma.*—Maternity benefits in the commonly-understood sense of the term do not exist so far as I am aware in Burma.

#### V.—Welfare (other than Health and Housing but including Education).

*Mr. W. H. C. Prideaux, Chief Inspector of Factories, Burma.*—Welfare work has not made much progress in this province. In two or three cases football grounds have been provided by the employers but these are made use of more by the clerical staff and works subordinates than by the actual work-people. At Namtu there is a Company's shop at which all employees may purchase stores at cheap rates. At the Burma Oil Company's works at Syriam the men subscribe to a hospital fund which they control themselves. At a few factories there are schools to which the employees may send their children but so few women and children are employed in this province that there is not the same necessity for schools and crèches that there is where married women work with their husbands in the factories.

32. (i) *Mr. A. J. Page, I.C.S., Labour Statistics Officer, Burma.*—The Burma Corporation, some of the oil firms, the Burma Railways, and one or two other firms provide facilities for the education of the children of their employees either by maintaining schools themselves or by contributing to existing schools and also afford encouragement to some sort of recreation for their clerical staff. Apart from this, very little in the way of welfare work is done by employers. One of the main reasons is that the nature of the industries and the conditions of labour do not lend themselves to the carrying out of such schemes. Though many large firms are engaged in the rice and saw mill industries the number of workers in each mill is relatively small and the mills are scattered all over the province. Also, in the case of rice mills a large proportion of the labour force is employed for only a few months in the year.

(ii) *Mr. A. J. Page, I.C.S., Labour Statistics Officer, Burma.*—As regards the activities of private associations of social workers or associations of industrial workers, the Young Men's Christian Association, Town Branch, in Rangoon is doing very useful work in educating labourers and their children and there are also some schools maintained by public subscription or by private individuals. The schools of the Andhra Social Service League, the Burma Provincial Hindu Sabha, the Bengal Mohamedan Association, the Hurry Krishna Pillay's School are a few of the more important. Some of these schools are doing very good work but are handicapped by lack of funds.

33. The Burmah Oil Company are known to employ a special welfare worker at their Syriam refineries. Further information from this and other commercial undertakings will be available at a later stage when they have been asked for their facts and opinions.

36. *Provision of Educational Facilities by Employers.*—*Vide Mr. Snow's Memorandum, pages 28—29.*

#### VII.—Safety.

43. *Mr. W. H. C. Prideaux, Chief Inspector of Factories, Burma.*—The regulations regarding safety in factories will be found in Chapter III of the Indian Factories Act and Rules 24 to 35A of the Burma Factories Rules. The corresponding regulations for mines are given in section 19 of the Indian Mines Act, the Regulations made under that Act by the Central Government and the Rules made under the same Act by the Local Government. As however the Inspectors of Mines are under the Central Government it is presumed that full information on the working of the Mines Act will be furnished to the Commission by the Central Government and in this note it is not proposed to make any comment on its administration in this Province. Certain rules in the "General Rules for all open lines of Railway in British India administered by Government" prescribe precautions which have to be taken for the safety of both the public and the employees of the Railway. So far as is known there are no special provisions for docks, for buildings or engineering works in course of construction nor it may be added for forestry although this last item may not fall within the terms of reference of the Commission.

There are special provisions for the use of boilers laid down in the Indian Boilers Act, for the storage, transport or use of explosives and petroleum in the Explosives and Petroleum Acts and electrical hazards are provided for by the Electricity Act. The above Acts are all Acts of the Government of India and are implemented by Regulations and Rules made by the Central or Local Governments. The Mines, Explosives and Petroleum Acts are mainly enforced by officers of the Central Government although district officers also perform functions under them. The Factories, Boilers and Electricity Acts are enforced by officers under the Local Government.

*Mr. D. H. James, Chairman, Commissioners for the Port of Rangoon.*—The working instructions of the Port Commissioners' Traffic Department, copies of which are issued to the staff in book form, include paragraphs on the subject of avoidance of accidents. Employees of the contractor receive instructions on these points from the Port Commissioners' staff.

44. *Mr. W. H. C. Prideaux, Chief Inspector of Factories, Burma.*—A table showing the accidents that occurred in factories during 1928 analysed by industries and causes will be found in

Appendix B attached to the annual report for that year. Of the 1,482 accidents 530 occurred in saw mills, 383 in rice mills and 442 in lead smelting works. Only about one-sixth of the accidents were due to machinery. The figures for mines and railways will presumably have been supplied to the Commission by the Central Government.

*Mr. D. H. James, Chairman, Commissioners for the Port of Rangoon.*—The return for the year 1928-29 show that there were no fatal accidents during that year; that the number of labourers injured was 71; that the injuries sustained were mainly crushed fingers and toes, and that the injuries resulted from individual carelessness in handling cargo.

46. *Mr. W. H. C. Prideaux, Chief Inspector of Factories, Burma.*—The Burma Factories Rules besides laying down a standard of guarding for certain machines and enforcing the provision of gangways and suitable ladders, etc., also require workmen engaged in certain dangerous operations to be suitably clad but the powers under the Indian Act for making rules are much less wide than the powers under the English Act for making Regulations. The question of Safety First was considered in Burma in 1925 and 1926 but after a conference and a certain amount of propaganda work by the department the Local Government decided that the Safety First campaign should be deferred until a demand for its introduction should be apparent on the part of the public. The illiteracy of the work-people in this country would require a special technic for Safety First propaganda to be developed somewhat different to that which has proved so successful in Europe and so far this has not been worked out. The Factory Department is a member of the Safety First Association and keeps in touch with modern developments but at present the difficulties in the way have prevented the department doing as much propaganda as it would have liked.

47. *Mr. W. H. C. Prideaux, Chief Inspector of Factories, Burma.*—Information as to accidents in non-regulated establishments is scanty but it appears from the Report on the Workmen's Compensation Act for 1928 that amongst 7,549 employees on the oil fields there occurred 13 fatal accidents, 24 cases of permanent disablement and 266 cases of temporary disablement. These wells are excluded from the provisions of the Mines Act and are not factories. At Rangoon, the Port Commissioners who employ 3,162 persons at their wharves and jetties paid compensation for 3 fatal accidents and in 72 cases of temporary disablement. Wharves and docks are not in this country, as they are in Great Britain, "factories" and are not subject to supervision by Inspectors. No figures are available for accidents which have taken place on buildings or engineering works under construction or repair nor for the timber extraction industry. Important as the latter industry is in this country it may not be considered to come within the terms of reference of the Commission.

48. *Mr. W. H. C. Prideaux, Chief Inspector of Factories, Burma.*—Some of the larger factories have their own doctors and hospitals. Others maintain less qualified men and have more limited resources and after a preliminary dressing send their serious cases to the Government Hospital but in the vast majority of factories there are no medicines, dressings or the most elementary appliances for dealing with accidents. Burma has not like some other Provinces any rule requiring the provision of first aid boxes and it is not clear under what section of the Act these rules have been made.

The Local Government has made rules under the Mines Act under which the Chief Inspector of Mines may require certain men to be trained in ambulance work; first aid appliances also have to be provided.

*Mr. D. H. James, Chairman, Commissioners for the Port of Rangoon.*—Departmental instructions as printed and issued to the wharf staff include a chapter on First Aid and procedure to be observed in dealing with labourers injured in the course of duty. Certain members of the Traffic staff have obtained First Aid certificates from the St. John's Ambulance Association.

49. *Mines.*—*Mr. T. Couper, I.C.S., Financial Commissioner, Reserved Subjects, Burma.*—No Inspector of Mines is stationed in Burma. An Inspector from India comes over now and again. The Financial Commissioner is inclined to the opinion that except in the mines of the Burma Corporation administration is slack and not very effective as is to be expected when the inspecting staff resides elsewhere. Prosecutions are not common.

*Factories.*—*Mr. W. H. C. Prideaux, Chief Inspector of Factories, Burma.*—As regards factories a not very successful attempt is made to inspect every factory at least once a year but in 1928 about 26 per cent. of the mills escaped inspection.—So many of the mills are seasonal that unless an Inspector can be in their neighbourhood during the busy season the visit can scarcely said to be effective. In many of the European and Indian mills the managers change frequently and this increases the difficulty of enforcing the provisions as to safety as the new manager pleads ignorance of the previous orders. The enforcement of the Boiler Rules by the Boiler Department has in the past been rendered difficult by shortness of staff and in 1,927 of the 3,157 registered boilers only 2,359 were inspected but additional inspectors have now been appointed. An inquiry into a recent explosion by which 7 persons were killed revealed that the provisions of the Petroleum Act were not observed and it is suggested that if it is impossible to station an Inspector of Explosives in this province it would be advantageous to transfer the administration of the Petroleum Act in factories to the Factory Department or at least to give them executive powers and make use of the Chief Inspector of Explosives as a consultant only.

50. *Mr. W. H. C. Prideaux, Chief Inspector of Factories, Burma.*—The hours worked—in most factories 10 a day—seem long but the work is not generally arduous and in cases where close attention is required such as in printing works and engineering workshops shorter hours are often worked. There is nothing to suggest in the accident reports received from factories that accidents are due to fatigue due to long hours. Some accidents have been traced to the long fasts undergone by Mahomedan workmen during Ramadan. Although the department has at times to press for better lighting no accidents have been actually traced to lack of illumination. Accidents due to the general untidiness of the work places are not uncommon; scrap iron and timber are allowed to litter the work places and pathways in otherwise well run factories in this country in a manner that would never be tolerated at home and this, joined to the practice of going bare-shod, causes many foot accidents.

### VIII.—Workmen's Compensation.

51. *Mr. A. J. Page, I.C.S., Labour Statistics Officer, Burma.*—The Workmen's Compensation Act, 1923, came into force on the 1st July 1924, and the subjoined table shows the extent to which compensation has been paid under the Act during the past four years in mining and factory establishments in Burma. The table, which has been compiled from the returns received from employers for the annual reports, excludes Railway establishments which submit their returns to the Railway Board and other establishments which are not required to submit returns.

Table.

Year.	Death.		Permanent disablement.		Temporary disablement.	
	No. of accidents.	Amount of compensation paid.	No. of accidents.	Amount of compensation paid.	No. of accidents.	Amount of compensation paid.
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
		Rs. A. P.		Rs. A. P.		Rs. A. P.
1925 ..	35	22,567 8 0	74	20,867 6 0	725	15,287 3 10
1926 ..	36	29,733 4 0	77	23,858 6 6	865	16,863 3 2
1927 ..	32	29,490 6 0	95	33,319 8 6	961	19,474 5 6
1928 ..	39	38,553 7 6	85	33,041 12 9	1,201	20,877 0 3

Taking the numbers of fatal and other accidents from the annual reports of the Factories and Mines Departments for the years 1925, 1926 and 1927, it will be seen that they are far in excess of the numbers of accidents for which compensation was paid during those years (*vide* Table appended below)—

Year.	Death.		Other Injuries.	
	According to Factories and Mines Reports.	According to the preceding Table.	According to Factories and Mines Reports.	According to the preceding Table.
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
1925 .. ..	55	35	1,348	799
1926 .. ..	51	36	1,464	942
1927 .. ..	59	32	1,569	1,046

Although some allowance should be made for disablements not lasting more than ten days, and accidents attributable to recognized contributory causes on the part of the workmen concerned, for which no compensation is payable, it cannot be said that the Act is being employed to the fullest possible extent. There is a tendency, particularly among small employers, to evade the obligations of the Act. They often fail to make deposits in fatal cases as required by section 8 (1) of the Act, and the Act contains no provision under which a Commissioner may on his own initiative compel them to do so. The workmen themselves are illiterate and ignorant and are not yet in a position to act for themselves without outside help or assistance. The necessity for making

workmen better acquainted with the provisions of the Act has been recognized; and with this end in view, arrangements have been made for notices printed in bold type and containing an abstract of the Act to be posted in conspicuous places near the main entrances of all industrial establishments.

No cases have been brought to notice of the operation of the Workmen's Compensation Act by itself having affected adversely the financial stability of any industrial establishments. Many of the large employers in Burma have insured themselves against this risk. Small employers do not as a rule avail themselves of facilities for insurance.

The Workmen's Compensation Act, 1923, has since its commencement, been applicable to seamen employed on ships of a registered tonnage of not less than 100 tons and to workmen employed for the purpose of loading, unloading or coaling any ship at any pier, jetty, landing place, wharf, quay, dock warehouse or shed, on, in or at which steam, water or other mechanical power or electrical power is used. The Act was extended in 1927 to workmen employed for a similar purpose in any harbour, roadstead or navigable river. The Table below indicates the extent to which compensation has been paid for accidents to such men in so far as information is available—

*Dock Labourers.*

Year.	Number of accidents.		
	Death.	Permanent disablement.	Temporary disablement.
1924 .. .. .	..	..	..
1925 .. .. .	..	..	..
1926 .. .. .	1	..	2
1927 .. .. .	..	..	..
1928 .. .. .	2	2	2

There has so far been no suggestion for a further extension of the Act in respect of this class of men.

52. *Mr. A. J. Page, I.C.S., Labour Statistics Officer, Burma.*—It would be useless to extend the Act to unorganized industry without the introduction at the same time of a compulsory insurance scheme. The introduction of such a scheme, however, does not seem to be practicable and if the Act is, as at present, confined to organized industry it may suitably be extended to workmen employed on plantations.

53. *Mr. A. J. Page, I.C.S., Labour Statistics Officer, Burma.*—The provisions of the Act relating to scales of compensation, conditions governing the grant of compensation, industrial diseases and machinery of administration seem to be suitable in so far as Burma is concerned, or at any rate no great practical difficulties or inconvenience in the working of the Act have been brought to light. These matters came recently under consideration in connection with a reference made by the Government of India on the subject, and no material changes were suggested. As regards industrial diseases, it may be noted that so far, in Burma, no cases in which compensation was paid for injuries caused by occupational diseases have been reported.

### IX.—Hours.

55. *A. Factories.—Mr. W. H. C. Frideaux, Chief Inspector of Factories, Burma.*—The majority of factories work a 60 hour week. In saw mills definite intervals are given and there is some tendency to poach on these intervals for saw sharpening. In rice mills definite intervals are not given but the men get off in turn for rest and food. Shorter hours are worked in the engineering and printing trades. In only a few factories is a short day worked on Saturday. Overtime is not common and the exemptions relating to overtime in consequence of press of work are being re-examined. In the up-country rice mills the men are required to be present even where there is no paddy to be milled but as they are paid by the month this is no hardship. The effect of the 60-hour week restriction works satisfactorily and owing to the rarity of the weekly half holiday the daily limit of 11 hours is rarely reached. I do not think there is any great demand for a reduction in the maximum hours of work. At present many mills work double shifts in the busy season and the two hours off allows sufficient time for rest. If this were increased to three hours there would probably be a lot of time cribbing. If any reduction in the hours of work is decided on I should prefer a compulsory half holiday. No complaints have been received on the score of fatigue and the intervals now given seem in practice to suit the workers.

In the ports Sunday is the normal rest day but other days are frequently substituted for the Sunday in order to complete shipping orders. On the whole it is believed that in these places

the weekly holiday is regularly given. The same cannot be said for up-country mills and the failure to give the weekly holiday is one of the commonest and most serious irregularities. A good many mills in the districts close on the Burmese Sabbath day instead of on the Sunday. There are only 50 Burmese Sabbath days in the year so that two or three times in the year holiday does not fall within three days of a Sunday but as in practice the Sabbath day is only made use of as a holiday in seasonal mills, I consider that in Burma a manager should be allowed to substitute the Burmese Sabbath as the weekly rest day but should not be allowed to make a further substitution.

62. The exemptions allowed from the statutory provisions of the Factory Act will be found in Part III of the Burma Factories Manual. They fall roughly into two classes in the first of which Sunday work is allowed on continuous processes or perishable goods and in the second overtime is permitted. Overtime in rice mills is exceptional as during the busy season a night shift is taken on. The general exemption relating to press of work is made very little use of but it is considered to be too general in its terms and is under revision.

The upkeep of a register of workers showing the hours of work of the employees has been discarded in cases where all the employees work the same hours as it is considered that the register prescribed under this section is intended only to afford evidence of the hours fixed by the employer under section 26 and that a record showing the hours actually worked cannot be required.

According to this office records the following factories work under Exemptions:—Electrical Power Station 1. Ice Factories 3. Oil Refineries 4. Pumping Stations 6. Chemical Works 1. Oil Mills 7. Aerated Waters Factories 3. Rice Mills (boiled paddy) 9. Bakeries 1. Rubber Factories 3. Brick Kilns 1. In almost all rice mills the special exemption allowing workmen to go for their meals in turn and not at fixed times is made use of.

63. B.—*Mines.*—*Mr. T. Couper, I.C.S., Financial Commissioner, Reserved Subjects, Burma.*—It has to be recognised that to a very large extent mining, as it is carried on in Burma, is not what is ordinarily connoted by the work. Most of it is surface work, underground working is the exception. The drilling of oil wells is exempted from all provisions of the Indian Mines Act, and the winning of tin, in so far as this is carried out on the tribute system, that is to say in the majority of the tin mines, is not governed by any restriction as to days or hours of work inasmuch as such mines have been exempted from the operations of sections 23 and 28 in the Indian Mines Act, 1923. The tributers determine their hours for themselves. To a small extent dredgers and gravel pumps are being installed and are superseding former methods. On dredgers work is organized in three shifts of 8 hours each. Far and away the most important mines in the full sense of the term are those of the Burma Corporation at Namtu in the Northern Shan States. There the working shifts are 8 hours except in the machine shop where the period is 9 hours. The Financial Commissioner is unable to comment on the suitability of these hours. In the Ruby Mines the working shifts is stated to be even longer, 9½ hours.

73 to 77. C.—*Railways.*—*Agent, Burma Railways.*—The principle adopted in the Traffic department is that if the work of employees is classified as “continuous” they work in three shifts, and with one day off the weekly hours of duty amount to 56 hours.

The running staff, *i.e.*, Guards, Travelling Ticket Examiners and Brakemen, with very few exceptions, ordinarily work 80 hours per week with a weekly rest day.

If the work is classified as “intermittent” the maximum hours of duty is 12 hours per day with compensatory intervals for meals.

In this we have been guided by the principle laid down in the Washington and Geneva Conventions, but there is a large number of staff who have not been brought within the scope of Conventions owing to shortage of quarters through lack of funds and to the shortage of trained staff.

73. A.—*Workshops.*

(i) *Normal Hours.*—

The hours per week are : 48

The hours per day are : Monday—Friday	.. ..	6.30—11.0
		12.30—16.30
Saturday	.. ..	6.30—12.0

Gangmen work for 8 hours on week days and 4 hours on Sundays.

(ii) *Overtime.*—This is limited under the Factory Act to 12 hours per week making a total of 60 hours per week. As far as possible overtime is avoided. The percentage of overtime has been as follows for the 6 months ending 30th June 1929 :—

Carriage and Wagon shops	.. .. .	1.8 per cent.
Locomotive	.. .. .	6.4 ..

Gangmen are only called out in cases of breaches or accidents.

B.—Loco. Running Staff.—

- (i) The average working hours for enginemen on regular services is  $8\frac{1}{2}$  hours per day.  
 (ii) For enginemen on Goods services the average number of hours worked per day is roughly  $8\frac{1}{2}$  hours.

74. Days worked for week (Weekly Rest)—

A. *Workshop Staff.*—All have the seventh day off duty.

B. *Other Staff.*—(Locomotive).

Running staff depends on the train working and the average is one day off in six.

Other staff are all employed in intermittent duty and practically have one day off in seven.

For gangmen and outdoor staff on the permanent way from 11 A.M. to 2 P.M.

75. *International Conventions relating to—*

- (i) *Hours.*—All workshop staff and outside mechanical staff have hours of work restricted to within 60 hours per week.

In regard to Loco. running staff it is not possible to bring them within the scope of the Conventions until a definite ruling has been issued by the Government of India.

- (ii) *Periods of Rest.*—This is not quite clear as questions 63 and 65 appear to cover this.

76. (i) There are no intervals based on fatigue.

- (ii) All men working regular hours have an interval for meals.

77. The Factory Act is rigidly applied to the satisfaction of the Government Factory Inspector.

77. D.—*Other establishments (I. E. establishments other than Factories, Mines and Railways).*

78. *Mr. A. J. Page, I.C.S., Labour Statistics Officer, Burma.*—The hours of work in the Rangoon docks and wharves are from 6 A.M. to Noon and from 1 P.M. to 6 P.M. making a total of 11 hours. For night work the hours are from 6 P.M. to 5 A.M. with no definite period of rest during that period. Workers are accustomed to take short spells off during the night as may be required and according as they can be spared.

79. There are six work days in the week, Sunday being taken as the day of rest.

80. No demand for the regulation of the hours of work has been made and in present conditions no action seems desirable.

X.—Special questions relating to women, young adults and children.

81. A.—*Factories.*—*Mr. W. H. C. Prideaux, Chief Inspector of Factories, Burma.*—Only about 10 per cent. of the number of persons employed in factories in this Province are women and in 1928 there were only 845 children. There seems a slight tendency for the number of women to increase and for the number of children to diminish but the changes are too small to have much significance. Infants are found in ginning factories where whole families work together picking over cotton, generally in the open air, and small children sometimes come into rice mills with their parents who have brought paddy to be milled. The prohibition of night work for women was most unpopular in the rice parboiling industry where the women turn over the paddy while it is drying after being soaked. Somewhat naturally they preferred to spread and gather the paddy in the cool of the evening or the very early morning to doing this work under the mid-day sun.

The regulations affecting children appear suitable and no cases of double employment have come to light.

In saw mills the workmen often begin as saw dust boys and work their way up until they eventually become sawyers. In the rice mills no children or very young adults are found amongst the mill hands. In any one mill all the workmen come from the same area or village and the fresher hands are taught by the older men.

There is so little skilled labour in the country that the question of blind alley employment scarcely arises.

The double shift system is not found in this country amongst women and children except to a very limited extent in cotton ginning factories where the shifts overlap; it seems to be harmless in these places except that it renders the administration troublesome as the registers are generally very badly kept.

In factories not subject to the Act practically no women and children are employed in this province; the arguments in favour of extending the Act are based rather in questions of sanitation, safety, the weekly rest day for men and unfair competition. The Act was extended to cover a match factory not worked by power but this has now installed power and at present there are no factories covered by section 2 (3) b. Proposals to extend the Act have had to be rejected on account of cost.

90. B.—*Mines.*—*Mr. T. Couper, I.C.S., Financial Commissioner, Reserved Subjects, Burma.*—As regards women they are employed only to a small extent and then on light work and always

above ground. In Tavoy they collect tin from the beds of streams. At Namtu a few are employed on day shifts in the smelter and copper plant. In the Southern Shan States they are engaged in the collection of slag from surface areas which were worked in the past by the Chinese.

92. C.—*Other establishments.*—*Mr. W. H. C. Prideaux, Chief Inspector of Factories, Burma.*—In other establishments to which the Factory Act might on other grounds be extended with advantage, such as buildings and engineering works in course of construction, docks and forestry camps, women are employed to only a very limited extent and there appears to be no need to specially regulate their work.

## XII.—Wages.

96. *Mr. A. J. Page, I.C.S., Labour Statistics Officer, Burma.*—No information regarding prevailing rates of wages and earnings of the various classes of workers is available for the Province as a whole though a report will be issued from the Labour Statistics Bureau very shortly giving all such details for the rice milling industry which is the largest industry in Burma.

The average earnings of workers in certain occupations in Rangoon, worked out from budgets collected in connection with an enquiry into the standard and cost of living of the working classes in Rangoon and given in Mr. Bannison's report are shown below :—

	Rs.	A.	P.
Tamil coal carriers .. .. .	25	2	11
Tamil paddy carriers .. .. .	24	8	1
Telugu handcart pullers .. .. .	43	1	2
Telugu rice bag carriers .. .. .	37	1	11
Telugu skilled factory workers .. .. .	36	6	5
Telugu stevedore and wharf coolies .. .. .	32	6	4
Telugu rickshaw pullers .. .. .	28	2	4
Telugu Corporation coolies .. .. .	25	10	2
Telugu cargo boatmen .. .. .	25	3	2
Telugu paddy carriers .. .. .	24	14	0
Telugu unskilled factory workers .. .. .	20	9	2
Uriya skilled factory workers .. .. .	39	5	8
Uriya tramway workers .. .. .	27	14	4
Uriya unskilled factory workers .. .. .	23	9	3
Hindustani durwans and peons .. .. .	25	0	8
Hindustani gharry-wallas .. .. .	24	15	8
Hindustani unskilled factory workers .. .. .	24	6	1
Chittagonian tindals .. .. .	45	10	2
Chittagonian firemen .. .. .	28	14	11
Chittagonian oilmen .. .. .	26	3	10

No figures for Burmese workmen in Rangoon are available.

*Mines.*—*Mr. T. Couper, I.C.S., Financial Commissioner (Reserved Subjects), Burma.*—Wages of the labourers in the mines vary with locality. In general unskilled labourers earn about Re. 1 a day. In the Southern Shan States the ordinary rates are eight annas for women slag pickers, Re. 1 for male surface workers, and Rs. 1-4-0 for unskilled workers underground. In the Northern Shan States the monthly average is Rs. 37-8-0. The method of calculating the wages in the Bawdwin mine is described on page 6 of the Annual Report of the Chief Inspector of Mines in India for the year 1927. In the Tavoy and Mergui Districts an Indian cooly in the mines earns Rs. 1-4-0 a day and a Chinaman Rs. 2. A tributator is usually paid Re. 1 per vis of tin-ore. Women employed on the surface in a quarry earn about 12 annas a day. Skilled labour is paid according to qualifications.

97. *Movements in recent years.*—*Mr. A. J. Page, I.C.S., Labour Statistics Officer, Burma.*—No information is immediately available in this head but the abovementioned report on wages in the rice milling industry will contain a comparison between present-day and pre-war wages.

98. *Mr. A. J. Page, I.C.S., Labour Statistics Officer, Burma.*—The amount of money remitted by workmen annually to their families in India runs into lakhs of rupees and is almost wholly done through the agency of the Post Office. Figures could be obtained from the Postmaster-General of the amounts sent but there would be no means of telling except for big centres, such as the Oil Fields and Namtu, how much of the money actually came from industrial employes. In the course of the investigations made in connection with the enquiry into the standard

and cost of living of the working classes in Rangoon it was found that about three-quarters of the savings of Indian workers as shown in the Table below were remitted to India :—

Race.				Monthly income.	Monthly expenditure.	Savings.
				Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.
Tamil	..	..	..	27 7 8	17 12 3	9 11 5
Telugus	..	..	..	28 14 10	19 11 10	9 3 0
Uriyas	..	..	..	35 0 3	20 2 8	14 13 7
Hindustanis	..	..	..	26 0 1	14 13 5	11 2 8
Chittagonians	..	..	..	29 5 3	17 5 1	12 0 2

NOTE.—Tamils and Telugus save about a third of their income whereas Uriyas, Hindustanis and Chittagonians save more than 40 per cent.

105. *Minimum Wages.*—*Mr. A. J. Page, I.C.S., Labour Statistics Officer, Burma.*—As far as this Province is concerned, wages both of skilled and unskilled labour are higher than in most of the other Provinces in India. In industrial establishments the unskilled labour is usually Indian contract labour, which is to a large extent migratory, and however desirable it might be to raise the wages of unskilled labour it would be impracticable under existing conditions to establish suitable machinery for doing so. These Indian labourers come from Madras because they can get higher wages here and there are better chances of employment. A bad harvest in Madras is invariably followed by a big influx of labourers. It must be borne in mind, however, that the supply of this labour in Burma and the demand for it are fairly well balanced and that if wages for unskilled labour were increased either here or in Madras by legislation it might seriously disturb this equilibrium with possibly disastrous results either to industry or labour. The tendency nowadays in most Western countries is for labour to be paid direct by the employer and it would certainly be advantageous both to the employers and the labourers in this province if the maistries or contractors could be dispensed with. If this did happen, employers would be able to control all their labour and it might then be practicable to introduce such legislation. At present employers know little or nothing about their contract labour. It is possible also that labour may become organised and be able to select its own representatives suitable for appointment to any boards which might be set up for the purpose of fixing minimum wages.

India is a young country industrially and its industries are on the whole much less efficient than those in Western countries. Since minimum wages must always be fixed with some regard to what industry in general can afford to pay, it follows that even if India had to establish machinery for fixing minimum wages, these wages would be lower than those obtaining in Western countries. It may be true that low wages paid in India and other Eastern countries help to depress the standard of living of the workers throughout the world, but whether or not industries in India in their present state of organization could afford to pay higher wages appears to be a debatable point.

106. *Mr. A. J. Page, I.C.S., Labour Statistics Officer, Burma.*—An enquiry was made in 1926 as to the extent to which fines were imposed in certain industrial establishments. In the case of rice and saw mills many employers replied that fines were rarely, if ever inflicted. Presumably they do not consider fining to be a satisfactory method of punishment. Messrs. Bulloch Bros. & Co. stated that they preferred to warn the persons concerned and if warnings were ineffectual, to dispense with their services. This seems to be the method usually adopted in most large rice mills. In the case of saw mills, figures could be obtained from only two, and the amount of fines deducted in these was practically negligible.

Outside the rice and saw mill industries most of the firms employing a large labour force have a regular system of fines. The Burma Oil Company, the British Burmah Petroleum Company and the Burma Corporation are typical examples and figures were obtained from these firms. Except where the fine has been imposed in consequence of a lost identification ticket, etc.—in which case fine is used to pay for another ticket—the amounts realized are ordinarily used for the benefit of the workmen, being credited to the firm's hospital or workmen's club or given to the workmen at the time of religious festivals.

In the case of the Burma Railways fines are inflicted in the workshops for breakages, loss of tools, etc., and in the Running Department for carelessness, inattention to duty and anything likely to jeopardise the safe working of the railway; they are said to be very occasional but no reliable figures could be obtained. The fines are paid into a Fine Fund used for the benefit of the workmen's institute.

Of the firms from which figures have been obtained the fines are heaviest in the case of the Rangoon Electric Tramway and Supply Company, the Burma Electric Supply Company, Man-

delay and the Moulmein Rubber Plantation. Tram drivers are fined for negligence in driving, and conductors for missing fares, issuing old tickets and cheating in various other ways. On rubber plantations fines are mainly imposed for bad tapping.

The Government Press has the largest percentage of employees fined, as many as 62 per cent. being fined every month.

The total amount of fines is however not very large when the amount of wages bill is taken into account.

No figures for native mills are on record. A certain amount of fining takes place in some of these mills, but as far as is known, it is not excessive. A proper system of fining in these mills would probably make for increased efficiency.

Some system of fining appears to be necessary for the maintenance of discipline and efficiency, but there is no evidence to show that it is abused to any appreciable extent in Burma. This Province does not seem to stand in need of any legislation at present.

*Mr. W. H. C. Prideaux, Chief Inspector of Factories, Burma.*—Fines are inflicted in most well organized factories and appear necessary for purposes of discipline. They do not appear to be excessive and in a few cases are credited to hospital funds but generally they are retained by the employers. In the case of coolies employed through a maistry the circumstances are rather different. Here there is reason to believe forced deductions are made for the benefit of the maistry but the whole question of the financial relations between the maistry and his coolies deserves more study than has yet been accorded to it in this province. The whole question of fines and other deductions is so bound up with the advance system under which the majority of the coolies,—as distinct from the mill hands—in rice mills, come to this country that legislation dealing with disciplinary fines only would be of very little value.

107. *Mr. A. J. Page, I.C.S., Labour Statistics Officer, Burma.*—In most industrial establishments, the staffs employed on a monthly basis are paid about the middle of the month following that in which the wages were earned. In the case of contract labour, payment is made through the maistries who give advances to the coolies and are therefore not particular about disbursing wages regularly or promptly.

Generally speaking, employers in Burma do not allow any undue delay to occur in the payment of wages and the necessity for legislation in this respect does not seem to exist. In the case of maistry labour, however, such legislation would appear to be impracticable.

*Mr. W. H. C. Prideaux, Chief Inspector of Factories, Burma.*—In the great majority of factories wages are paid monthly and generally about a fortnight after the end of the month. This delay in payment has been explained by the difficulty of preparing the wages sheets sooner but the difficulty has been greatly exaggerated and the real reason for the delay is undoubtedly a desire to have some hold over the workmen so that they will not leave without notice. In some cases, e.g., in some cotton ginning factories, wages are paid daily on the following morning. There would be no disadvantage in legislation requiring the wage period not to exceed a month and requiring wages to be paid not later than 15 days after the end of the period. The general introduction of a wage period shorter than a month would not, I think, be to the advantage of the workmen as most of them transmit a portion of their wages to their families in India. There is no reason why wages should not be paid within 15 days of the period in which they are earned and this would prevent long delays in payment. I have come across a case in which no wages were paid for four and a half months but such cases are extremely rare. Legislation dealing with the payment of wages might with advantage lay down what notice should be given when an employer wishes to dismiss his workmen or when they wish to leave.

108. *Mr. A. J. Page, I.C.S., Labour Statistics Officer, Burma.*—Mr. Bennisson makes the following remarks in his Report above quoted :

In rice mills, "practically all the paddy carriers and the bagging and stitching coolies are indebted to their sub-maistries. The general practice is for the employer to advance money to the head maistry at the beginning of the season, and he makes advances to the sub-maistries of the paddy carriers, who in turn make advances to the coolies. The sub-maistries of the bagging and stitching coolies do not as a rule take advances from the head maistry. The paddy carriers recruited in India always arrive in this country indebted to the sub-maistries and usually remain so for the rest of their lives. Whenever they want to return to India the sub-maistry allows them only on condition that they come back when required. After some months' stay they usually return after getting a fresh advance to defray expenses on the way. The sub-maistry keeps in touch with the coolies when they are in India and if they refuse to come back he threatens to sue them for the debt and attach their property. Thus many of these paddy carriers are men who have worked for the sub-maistry for a number of years. The same applies to coal carriers. The bagging and stitching coolies usually pay off their advances towards the end of the year and then obtain fresh advances. As regards the extent of indebtedness of other classes of labour, no reliable information is available.

Repayments of advances by the coolies to the sub-maistries or by the sub-maistries to the head maistries, are usually made only when the mill is fairly busy, say from January to July

or August. In the other months earnings are not ordinarily sufficient to allow of any repayments of advances being made.

Accounts are not regularly kept by the sub-maistries and the coolies never know the exact extent of their indebtedness. The advances received by the head maistry from the employer are always paid off before the end of the busy season. The employer deducts an instalment from each weekly bill submitted by the head maistry. The sub-maistries pay advances to the coolies in order to retain a hold on them. They prefer coolies from their own or neighbouring villages so that if the coolies run away their property can be more easily attached. The coolies too are often at the end of their resources and are willing to do anything in order to raise a little ready money. *Backsheesh* is usually demanded by coolies as they want to make sure of at least part of their wages."

109. *Bonus and Profit sharing Schemes.*—*Mr. A. J. Page, I.C.S., Labour Statistics Officer, Burma.*—No such schemes appear to be in operation in this Province. The bonuses sometimes paid to employees in industrial establishments are in reality more in the nature of overtime payments.

### XIII.—Industrial Efficiency of Workers.

112 to 114. *Lieutenant-Colonel G. G. Jolly, I.M.S., Director of Public Health, Burma.*—Generally speaking, it is my opinion that the physique of the Indian immigrant cooly is on the average definitely inferior to that of the Burman labourer. As regards health, he frequently suffers from chronic infections such as hook-worm, malaria and dysentery, which without producing acute illness, cause his general health to be maintained at relatively low level. Further his standard of living from the point of view of diet is definitely low, and in many cases the dietetic margin of safety is extremely fine with the result that general nutrition is frequently poor. The hot and humid climate undoubtedly is an important factor in producing a relatively low output of work.

115. (viii) The dietary of the immigrant cooly, containing as it does an excess of carbohydrate and a deficit, according to European standards, of protein, enables a rapid development of heat and energy but does not favour tissue repair. My interpretation of this is that the cooly on such a diet, while he can put forth a good deal of exertion, is lacking in staying power, in recuperative power after an overstay and possibly in resistance to infection.

(ix) There can be little doubt that the abuse of alcohol and drugs, particularly by the immigrant coolies, is an important factor at all events in a town like Rangoon. Dr. Dalal's remarks in his memorandum submitted as Appendix D, pages 114 and 115 of the Rangoon Health Enquiry Committee's Report, should be read in this connection.

### XIV.—Trade Combinations.

117. *Mr. A. J. Page, I.C.S., Labour Statistics Officer, Burma.*—Apart from the Burma Chamber of Commerce, the Burmese, the Indian and the Chinese Chambers of Commerce, the Tavoy Chamber of Commerce, and the Rangoon Trades Association, there are no great combinations of employers in Burma.

The only organisation of the employees of any importance in the Province is the Burma Labour Association which was formed in Rangoon in 1920. It has a membership of about 7,000 and its objects are said to be to raise the general status of Chittagonian labourers including mill hands, crews, etc., throughout Burma and to settle disputes by arbitration. The Association is affiliated with the All-India Trade Union Congress, Bombay, and seems to have some connection with the International Trade Union Federation, Amsterdam; its President, Mr. Abdul Barea Chowdhury, is a capitalist and large employer of labour.

There are a few other organizations of minor importance, viz., the Burma Motor Drivers' Association, the Burma Chinese Clerks and Artisans' Association and the Chinese Labourers' and Merchants' Charitable Association in Rangoon, the Amherst District Motor Labour Association in Moulmein, and the Oil-fields' Labour Union in Magwe, and their objects are said to be generally to protect the interests of the members. A few more organizations have sprung up recently in Rangoon, and particulars in respect of them are being collected.

118. There have been no conflicts between any organizations of employers and those of employees such as to affect industries in a material way, and it may be said that in Burma the employers and the employed have so far on the whole worked well together. There are no effective organizations of workers, and the workers seem to be generally satisfied with the prevailing conditions.

119. The organizations of employers mentioned under item (100) generally interest themselves in all matters connected with the commercial and industrial development of the Province and advise on questions referred to them by Government. In the absence of any effective organizations of workers, these organizations of employers look after the workers' interests as well as their own and so far they seem to have done it satisfactorily.

The organizations of workers mentioned in the same item seem generally to confine their activities to the members of the individual organizations concerned and their activities very rarely extend beyond such members. They exercise little or no influence outside their membership.

120. Apart from what has been stated already under the preceding items, especially under item (100), there is nothing further to report under this head about the individual trade unions.

121. In Burma only one trade union, viz., the Burma Motor Drivers' Association having a membership of a little over 200 has so far registered itself under the Act. Thus we have hardly any experience to justify our offering any comments on the effects of the working of the Act or any suggestions for possible amendments to it. The Trade Union movement has made very little advance in the Province, and no great progress in this direction may be expected in the present unorganized condition of labour and the ignorance and illiteracy prevailing among the workers in general.

### XV.—Industrial Disputes.

123 to 126. *Mr. A. J. Page, I.C.S., Labour Statistics Officer, Burma.*—There have not been in Burma any periodically recurring industrial disputes of any great magnitude. Such disputes as occurred were sporadic or of no great importance. Many of them proved more or less abortive.

Not long ago there were a few strikes in which considerable number of workpeople were involved and which caused some trouble, e.g., those of the Burman employees of the Yenangyang oil-fields in 1923, of the Stevedore coolies in 1924 and of the Chittagonian crews of the Irrawaddy Flotilla Company in 1925. The workpeople involved in the first strike numbered about 4,000 and the strike after lasting for about six months seemed to have died out. The other two strikes involving about 3,000 workpeople each collapsed after a short duration. The Burmese strikers in the oil-fields put forward various grievances regarding conditions and hours of work but the strike subsequently became involved in the activities of Burmese politicians. Government had to maintain a large police force to preserve order. In the case of the Chittagonian strike which was largely for an all-round increase in pay, Government refused to intervene in any way.

There has been no acute conflict between capital and labour in Burma, and this may be accounted for by the fact that the majority of the labourers in the Province are Indians and that the conditions prevailing here being better than those obtaining in India, they are comparatively more contented than their brethren in India. The absence of any effective labour organizations is also possibly another factor.

There is no conciliation and arbitration machinery in Burma. Such strikes as have occurred were either settled by negotiations and discussion between the parties or their representatives, or collapsed after a short duration.

The Trades Disputes Act, 1929, came into force only recently and no occasion for using the Act has yet arisen.

### XVI.—Law of Master and Servant.

127. *Mr. A. J. Page, I.C.S., Labour Statistics Officer, Burma.*—The Workmen's Breach of Contract Act, 1859, as amended by Act XII of 1920, was repealed by the Workmen's Breach of Contract (Repealing) Act, 1925, with effect from the 1st April 1926. The Government of India recognized at the time that although the Act might not be necessary as an all-India measure, Provincial Governments might find it necessary to place before the local legislatures some measure to give protection, where necessary, to employers and industrialists in particular areas and in particular circumstances. Accordingly in communicating their decision to repeal the Act, the Government of India left it to the Local Government to take, if they so desired, steps to prepare such a local measure as might be thought to be required for particular areas and particular conditions of employment in the Province.

The employers of labour in Burma excepting a few were in favour of such a local measure. The Hon'ble Judges of the High Court also considered one necessary and were of the opinion that conditions in Burma were such as to demand the continuance of legislation on the lines of the Workmen's Breach of Contract Act and that the Act alone saved employers from being looted of large sums by way of advance, by persons against whom a civil remedy was worthless. The administrative officers consulted were not all agreed, but the majority of the officers considered a local measure unnecessary or doubted the necessity for such a measure. The Local Government after a careful consideration of the question decided to take no action in the matter. They wanted to leave it to the Burma Chamber of Commerce or other body of employers to initiate any legislation of the kind and leave the decision with the Legislative Council.

So far no legislation has been initiated nor has there been any demand for such legislation. Employers have apparently adjusted themselves to the altered conditions following the repeal of the Act without any great difficulty or inconvenience.

Further information will doubtless be available when employers state their case before the Commission.

(109) to (113). No information is available under these heads.

### XVII.—Administration.

133. *Mr. W. H. C. Prideaux, Chief Inspector of Factories, Burma.*—All Labour legislation is undertaken by the Central Government but the Acts generally give power to the Provincial Governments to make rules to implement the statutory provisions. Model Rules are issued by the Central Government and the Provincial Rules are based on these. This accounts for the great similarity that will be found in all the Provincial Rules. There is however a tendency for them to diverge as time goes on owing to local needs. The attitudes of the Central and Local Governments towards Labour questions seem to be in the main the same but the fact that the Local Government have to provide funds for the carrying out of legislative requirements and have also the difficulty of working out of the detailed administration while the Central Government gets all the kudos for ratifying the Labour Conventions and for introducing advanced legislation tends to make the Provincial Government more conservative than the Central. Thus I may instance the refusal of this Province to extend the Factories Act to small factories and its much more decided objection to the introduction of sickness insurance. There has been no such friction between the Central and Provincial Governments in the administration of Labour questions as has been experienced in Australia and the United States between the Federal and State Authorities.

136. *Mr. W. H. C. Prideaux, Chief Inspector of Factories, Burma.*—The Administration Authorities are detailed in the reply to question 43.

(i) *Work of Special Labour Offices or Officers.*—*Mr. A. J. Page, I.C.S., Labour Statistics Officer, Burma.*—There is no special Labour Officer in Burma corresponding to any such official as, for example, the Labour Commissioner in Madras. There is an Officer-in-charge of the Labour Statistics Bureau which has been in existence since 1925. He is a member of the Indian Civil Service who has, in addition to an Assistant, three Investigators and a small office staff.

The chief functions of the Bureau are to collect statistics under the following heads:—

- (1) Movement of prices; (2) Wages in various occupations and localities; (3) Family Budgets for various classes and localities; (4) Cost of living index for various classes and localities; (5) Rent; (6) Hours and conditions of Labour; (7) Conditions of recruitment; (8) Immigration and Emigration; (9) Trade Unions; and (10) Industrial disputes.

A Report of, and enquiry into, the Standard and Cost of Living of the Working Classes in Rangoon was issued by the Bureau in 1928 and Cost of Living Index numbers based on the information obtained at that enquiry are published month by month in the official Gazette.

The Officer-in-Charge, Labour Statistics Bureau, is also Protector of Immigrants and Emigrants in Rangoon and in that capacity, with the aid of an Assistant, has to watch the interests of deck passengers proceeding to or from Rangoon. He is also Commissioner under the Workmen's Compensation Act for the Insein, Hanthawaddy and Rangoon Districts as well as Registrar of Trade Unions under the Indian Trade Unions Act of 1926.

137. *Mr. W. H. C. Prideaux, Chief Inspector of Factories, Burma.*—The Factory Act extends to the whole of Burma and has been extended with modifications by Notification to the Northern Shan States. In this area the sections relating to hours of work (sections 21, 27 and 28) and Sunday work (section 22) do not apply.

138. *Mr. W. H. C. Prideaux, Chief Inspector of Factories, Burma.*—Abstracts containing the main provisions of the Act are exhibited in all Factories but they are probably very rarely read by the work people and frequently the employers themselves do not well understand the requirements of the Act. Similar Abstracts of the Workmen's Compensation Act have been distributed and as these are briefer it is hoped that the injured persons or their friends may take the trouble to make themselves acquainted with their rights.

139. *Mr. W. H. C. Prideaux, Chief Inspector of Factories, Burma.*—At the end of 1928 there were 1,047 registered factories for which there were three full-time Inspectors, i.e., a chief Inspector and two Inspectors. In the opinion of the writer this staff is inadequate and recommendations have been made to Government for the re-organization of the Department but the poverty of the Province renders it difficult to provide for any additional expenditure. In addition the District Magistrates, *ex-officio* Inspectors and a few other district officers have been appointed additional Inspectors. The Director of Public Health and his Assistants are also *ex-officio* Inspectors for sanitary matters. The majority of these officers are however too occupied with their ordinary duties to be able to spend much time on Factory Inspection. In 1928, 46 visits were paid by Inspectors other than the full-time Inspectors.

Judging from the Annual Reports from the other Provinces the administration appears uniform throughout India and Burma but there is really no evidence available on which an accurate opinion can be based.

(iii) For the last five years the convictions obtained average 35 a year. Prosecutions are generally only instituted after repeated instructions and cautions except in cases of persons illegally employed. The extreme difficulty of detecting illegal overtime and Sunday work in the up-country mills renders it necessary to prosecute for these offences without previous warnings. The penalties are generally on the light side and I consider that a minimum as well as a maximum penalty should be laid down in the Act. One most unfortunate result of prosecutions which has come to light where workpeople have been called as witnesses is that the manager has discharged the men who gave evidence against him. This difficulty has been experienced in the case of a prosecution for illegal Sunday work. Two mills were visited on a Sunday and the men admitted that they had had no holiday. In fact the mills appeared to have run without a holiday since the beginning of the season. In Court in one case they went back on this and the Magistrate held that the manager had only failed to give notice of the change of holiday, treated it as a formal offence and inflicted a fine of Rs. 25. In another case, heard on the same day, where the men stuck to their previous statement, the manager was fined Rs. 200 and the men were summarily dismissed. This difficulty might, I think, be overcome if Inspectors had power to compound offence. This would also obviate the waste of the Inspector's time that prosecutions frequently entail.

140. *Mr. T. Couper, I.C.S., Financial Commissioner, Reserved Subjects, Burma.*—No Inspector of Mines is stationed in Burma. An Inspector from India comes over now and again. Except in the mines of the Burma Corporation administration is slack and not very effective as is to be expected when the inspecting staff resides elsewhere. Prosecutions are not common.

141. *Agent, Burma Railways.*—Certain powers have been delegated to district officers. These powers include the appointment or dismissal of all menial staff, and within certain limits, which are fixed by grade of pay, the appointment, promotion, fining and discharge or dismissal of subordinate employees.

In the Traffic Manager's Office there is a "Personnel Officer" who deals with all matters affecting the personnel of the department, and refers to the Traffic Manager for his decision all questions of policy, pay and appeals.

142. *Mr. W. H. C. Prideaux, Chief Inspector of Factories, Burma.*—Plantations, docks and other industrial establishments are not subject to any inspection as regards hours of work or safety. Plantations would appear to be outside the scope of the Convention as being agricultural and not industrial concerns and docks and other industrial undertakings are exempt in India from the provisions of the 8-hour Convention in virtue of Article 10. Plantations and other large collections of workers are subject to sanitary inspections by the district health officials.

*Mr. D. H. James, Chairman, Commissioners for the Port of Rangoon.*—The Port Commissioner's wharves and jetties are under the immediate control of the Traffic Department, the officials of which inspect them daily. Buildings plant such as cranes, etc., are under the control of the Engineering Department and are subject to the constant inspection by the senior officers of that department.

### XVIII.—Intelligence.

143. *Mr. W. H. C. Prideaux, Chief Inspector of Factories, Burma.*—The statistics collected by the Factory Department are obtained directly from the occupiers of factories or compiled from the departmental records and are published in Statements I to VIII at the end of the Annual Factory Report. The questions on which Statement V are based are not well understood by the managers and the statement is not very reliable. In Statement VI the figures, especially for minor accidents, are believed to be too low as a good many small injuries in up-country mills are probably never heard of. A greater degree of accuracy would be obtained if the information was collected by Inspectors when visiting the mills, but this would involve very great delay in preparing the statements.

*Mr. A. J. Page, I.C.S., Labour Statistics Officer, Burma.*—Existing statistics with regard to labour and labour problems in Burma are not very extensive. The Chief Inspector of Factories publishes returns showing the number of employees in the establishments which come by law under his control. Such figures are supplied by the employers of labour as also are those relating to accidents which have occurred to their employees. The various Commissioners under the Workmen's Compensation Act also compile figures with regard to all accidents which come under their particular notice. These will include accidents, such as those occurring in docks or on shipping, of which the Chief Inspector of Factories has no knowledge, but will not include accidents occurring in occupations outside the scope both of the Factories Act and of the Workmen's Compensation Act.

Since only one Trade Union is registered statistics with regard to the strength of the various labour associations which exist (though in all they are not many) are very meagre and as matters stand it cannot be seen how they can be improved.

There are no other statistics available or regularly obtainable.

144. *Mr. A. J. Page, I.C.S., Labour Statistics Officer, Burma.*—In the absence of the likelihood of any increased financial support for statistical work it would seem to be impracticable to discuss the possibility of any far-reaching improvement in labour statistics.

143 and 144. *Lieut.-Col. G. G. Jolly, I.M.S., Director of Public Health, Burma.*—The attempt to reply to this memorandum illustrates very clearly how exceedingly incomplete our existing statistics are, and also our means of collection. While it is true that we cannot generally speaking advance the collection of our vital statistics more rapidly than the standard of education throughout the country permits, it is nevertheless the case that our existing statistics are imperfect and unreliable to a great extent on account of lack of public health staff for supervision. In regard to their compilation and interpretation a great need exists for a trained Statistician on the staff of the Director of Public Health to make use of the vast amount of material already collected and to advise on improved methods of collecting and compiling our vital statistics. Further there is no reason beyond lack of staff why we should not be able to take up the question of the collection of vital statistics of industrial workers as a separate class.

145. *Mr. A. J. Page, I.C.S., Labour Statistics Officer, Burma.*—A cost of living enquiry amongst the working classes in Rangoon was made by the Labour Statistics Bureau under Mr. J. J. Bennison, I.C.S., and the results of the enquiry were published in a Report issued in 1928. A cost of living index number was compiled starting with 1914 as the basic year and in the report the figure was given month by month up to the time of publication of the report. Subsequently the Bureau has issued monthly, in the *Burma Gazette*, a revised figure or rather set of figures, for separate budgets are calculated for Burmese, Tamils, Telugus and Uriyas, Hindustanis and Chittagonians, respectively.

The Bureau has also completed a wage census of the employees in rice mills in Burma and the report dealing with this subject should be published and be in the hands of the members of the Commission before their arrival in Burma.

146. *Mr. A. J. Page, I.C.S., Labour Statistics Officer, Burma.*—This census is being followed up by a similar one dealing with the Saw Mill industry, and others dealing with the Oil Fields, Mining and Agriculture will have to be undertaken.

On an interesting point not raised in the memorandum the Financial Commissioner (Reserved Subjects) writes as follows:—

“A feature in the tin mines to which the attention may be directed is the issue to Managers of Mines of special licenses under the Opium Act with a view to the supply of opium to Chinese labourers. This does not appear to come within the Draft List of Subjects but it is a matter which perhaps merits investigation.”

## GOVERNMENT OF BURMA

### SUPPLEMENTARY MEMORANDUM No. 1, DEALING WITH THE STRIKE OF STEVEDORE COOLIES IN RANGOON DURING MAY 1930.

The system under which stevedore coolies work has already been set out briefly on page 3 of the Memorandum prepared for the use of the Royal Commission on Labour in 1929.

Exactly six years before the recent strike, on May 6th, 1924, the shipping coolies went on strike. On that occasion there seems to have been a certain amount of unrest due to dissatisfaction with the working of the gang system and in particular with the conduct of some of the head maistries. The immediate demands made by the strikers were for an increase in the daily wage from Rs. 1-8 to Rs. 2 together with a recognised interval for food in the middle of the day for those working on the day shift. The strike lasted for about a fortnight and then suddenly collapsed without the coolies succeeding in their demands. It is understood that the concession of a midday interval was promised to them but in practice no alteration was made in the hours of working.

The coolies bore in mind the fact that they had been defeated and the recent strike was really a re-opening of the previous one six years before. The 5th of May 1930 is notable as the date on which a serious earthquake occurred in Rangoon late in the evening about the time when the news was spreading round the town that Mr. Gandhi had that day been arrested in India. Consequently on the following day there was practically a complete cessation of work of all descriptions. The idea now seems to have occurred to the coolies that the time was opportune to reopen the question of their pay. There seems to have been no immediate previous discussion of the subject. The coolies found themselves temporarily unemployed and no doubt at the instigation of agitators, decided to remain out until their demands were satisfied. Eventually they agreed to return to work on the promise that they would receive an increase of 4 annas from Rs. 1-8 to Rs. 1-12 in their daily pay. This agreement was arranged on May 24th, 1930, but on May 26th when they started to return to work they ran foul of the Burmese labourers who had acted as strike breakers in the interval. Serious rioting ensued and work remained at a standstill for another week until a Conciliation Board which had been constituted in the meanwhile

effected a settlement and work was resumed on the shipping in the harbour. The basis of the settlement was an undertaking by the stevedores to work half the ships by Burmese labour and half by Telugu labour.

The foregoing account does not mention the names of any representatives of employers or employees who negotiated the terms as these matters are not done on Western lines so far as Telugu coolies are concerned. The procedure is as follows. A mass meeting is called and when a large enough audience has assembled, some one on the one side addresses the crowd. He may be answered at length by some self-constituted spokesman on the other side and so the discussion will go on. There is no one in charge of the meeting and to the onlooker it appears that no decision can ever be reached. Such a meeting may last for several hours when suddenly without any formal resolution being put to the meeting, the crowd rises to its feet and a decision, obviously unanimous, is announced.

As regards the history of the wage rate with reference to cost of living, other wage rates and previous changes, it is regretted that no information is available in this office. Dissatisfaction on the part of the labourers has usually centred itself on the harsh methods of head maistries and others. There is so much greater correspondence between wages earned and the cost of living in Rangoon as compared with conditions in the home districts in the Madras Presidency from which economic pressure has driven these coolies that proximity to the starvation line has never been the predominant factor in cooly strikes in Burma.

An extract from the Report of the Rangoon Riots Enquiry Committee (1930) is appended.

*Extract from the Report of the Rangoon Riots Enquiry Committee (1930).*

NARRATIVE OF EVENTS.

2. Before offering any general criticism or expressing any general opinion on the points referred to us for enquiry, we think it will be convenient to set forth such a general outline of the relevant facts as seem to us to be established with reasonable clearness by the evidence we have taken.

Until May of this year the shipping labour of the Port of Rangoon had been for many years generally in the hands of Telugus from the Madras Presidency who, in Rangoon, are ordinarily known as Coringhis; the number of such labourers actually employed would be on the average about 2,000, but the actual number employed at any one time would fluctuate considerably according to the season of the year. The total number of workers amongst whom the work was distributed would greatly exceed this figure. The basic rate of pay received by the workers was Rs. 1-8 a day, but this does not mean that the individual worker received Rs. 45 a month or anything like that sum. The labour was entirely casual labour, and striking an average throughout the year, an individual cooly probably did not obtain more than about 12 to 16 days' work in a month, or not much more than Rs. 20 in pay. The system under which the coolies are employed and the rate of wages paid to them is fixed, is somewhat complicated. The British India Steam Navigation Company, which owns a far bigger proportion of the shipping in the port than any other one company, employs its own labour through its own stevedoring staff. The other shipping companies mostly arrange for their labour with firms of stevedores, of which there are five in Rangoon. In the majority of cases the stevedores enter into direct contracts with the owners in Great Britain or elsewhere. The arrangement generally in force has been that the stevedores have agreed to supply labour at so much a ton of cargo handled, and the engagement of labour and payment of cooly wages has been left entirely to them. It is obvious, however, that any general increase of the rates of wages must ultimately fall on the shipping companies.

3. On the 6th May last, there was a general stoppage of work in the loading of ships in the Port of Rangoon. No previous complaints had been made by the coolies as to the conditions under which they were working, and in its origin this stoppage was clearly due to a hartal declared on account of the arrest of Mr. Gandhi which was known in Rangoon in the afternoon of the 5th May. A few hours afterwards there was a serious earthquake in Rangoon which accentuated the feeling of unrest. As to the development of the situation in the next few days the evidence is somewhat uncertain. A few gangs returned to work for the British India Steam Navigation Company on the night of the 6th, and the next day a larger number worked for the Company. So far it does not appear that there had been any general demand for an increase of wage. Demands had however been made in some quarters for an increased rate of wage, and on the morning of the 7th one of the stevedores agreed to pay his labourers at the rate of Rs. 1-12. The result was that on the 8th no labour was procurable at the old rate of Rs. 1-8, and the rest of the shipping in the harbour lay idle. On May 9th at a meeting of shipping agents and stevedores it was agreed that no more than the original rate of Rs. 1-8 should be paid, and that evening the stevedore who had paid Rs. 1-12 came into line with the others. From that date there was a general strike amongst the Telugu shipping coolies in the port.

A suggestion that an increase of two annas should be granted was made but apparently did not at the time reach the ears of those ultimately responsible. For some days cessation of work on the ships in port was general. Steps were then taken to recruit Burmese labour. Burmese labour was first actually employed by one of the stevedores on the 14th, and within a few days of this it was employed generally. By the 22nd there are said to have been as many as 2,000 Burmese coolies employed. The men were however entirely untrained and congestion of the shipping in the river continued to increase. On about the 22nd the Scindia Steam Navigation Company announced its intention of granting an increase of four annas. The other shippers then reconsidered the question, and at a meeting on Saturday the 24th they came to a unanimous agreement to grant the extra four annas. Some six years ago a similar strike had occurred amongst the shipping labourers, and Burmese labour had been employed. When the strike was over the original strikers had been re-employed and the Burmese labour dispensed with. During the recent strike the possibility of there being a recurrence of this procedure had been taken up by certain Burmese newspapers. When on the 24th May the shippers agreed to give the increase of four annas there appears to have been some sort of understanding that Burmese labour should not be dispensed with entirely. But the understanding was of the vaguest nature. The British India Steam Navigation Company did in fact continue to employ some Burmese labour on the Sunday night and Monday. But as regards the other companies, the matter was left to be dealt with by the stevedores. On the Sunday the Telugu coolies held a meeting at which they decided to accept Rs. 1-12 and a number of them actually went out to work that night. In one case we have evidence that Burmans and Coringhis worked that night in the same ship and that there was no sign of ill-feeling between the two communities.

## GOVERNMENT OF BURMA.

### SUPPLEMENTARY MEMORANDUM NO. 2.

Functions of Protector of Immigrants and Emigrants and his assistant, as defined in Government Resolution of 5th April 1918 :—

I. To get into touch with all the authorities and agencies responsible for the welfare and provision of facilities for the transport of deck passengers, the British India Steam Navigation Company, the Municipality, the Port Trust, the Chief Collector of Customs, the Commissioner of Police, Rangoon, and the Port Health Officer; to arrange with them the best methods of removing the difficulties and mitigating the discomforts of the embarkation and debarkation of deck passengers; and to report to the Local Government when in his opinion the best methods feasible are not being adopted;

II. To get into touch with employers of labour and coolie maistries of Rangoon with a view to regulating as far as possible, through their agency, the pressure of the deck passenger traffic on the shipping space available;

III. To consult the British India Steam Navigation Company as to the best methods of securing that tickets shall be sold to deck passengers at the prescribed rates, and to arrange for the adoption of such methods;

IV. To receive complaints from deck passengers as regards any grievances connected with embarkation or debarkation or with the sale of tickets, and to take the action directed under Instruction (I) above in all cases in which a legitimate grievance has been established;

V. To see that adequate shelters for deck passengers unable to secure accommodation elsewhere are provided by the responsible agency;

VI. To assist the Municipality and the Police in the control of encampments for waiting deck passengers especially with regard to the measures necessary to secure that the shelters provided shall be occupied only by *bona fide* deck passengers.

**GOVERNMENT OF BURMA.**  
**SUPPLEMENTARY MEMORANDUM No. 3.**

*Number of Burmese and Indian Shipping Labourers employed at Rangoon from June 1930 month by month.*

Stevedores.	June 1930 2nd to 30th.		July 1930.		August 1930.		September 1930.		October 1930.	
	Burman.	Indian (Telugu).	Burman.	Indian (Telugu).	Burman.	Indian (Telugu).	Burman.	Indian (Telugu).	Burman.	Indian (Telugu).
British India Steam Navigation Co. .. .. .	14,779	18,792	11,266	13,377	8,490	12,034	7,277	10,797	7,506	10,161
Average per day .. .. .	510	648	363	432	274	388	243	360	242	323
Rushall & Co. .. .. .	9,103	18,469	4,130	7,845	2,120	5,850	4,742	4,136	4,780	4,934
Average per day .. .. .	314	637	133	253	68	189	158	138	154	159
Hurry Krishna Pillai & Co. .. .. .	5,985	10,775	2,384	6,793	1,904	5,779	6,433	3,966	2,852	3,783
Average per day .. .. .	206	372	77	219	61	186	214	132	92	122
Vrsalovich & Co. .. .. .	1,570	2,098	1,222	2,214	760	1,552	696	2,610	760	1,058
Average per day .. .. .	54	72	39	71	25	50	23	87	25	34
Cemotto Elsey & Co. .. .. .	3,335	2,394	2,441	1,080	475	1,954	2,246	703	255	1,427
Average per day .. .. .	115	83	79	35	15	63	75	23	8	46
Nichols & Co. .. .. .	1,280	2,514	1,230	726	548	1,044	1,423	1,018	536	755
Average per day .. .. .	44	87	40	23	18	34	47	34	17	24
Total .. .. .	36,052	55,042	22,673	32,035	14,297	28,213	22,817	23,230	16,689	22,118
Average per day .. .. .	1,243	1,898	731	1,033	461	910	761	774	538	713

MR. C. A. SNOW, M.A., I.E.S., DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION, BURMA.

### V.—Welfare.

36. (i) The list of schools given below shows the provision of education facilities by employers in Burma for adult workers and workers' children.

It will be noted that there is only one school for adults. The Adult Education Movement started in Burma only four years ago, and outside Rangoon and the Military Police the demand hardly exists. Though the Military Police force does not come within the purview of the Commission, it may be mentioned that night schools have been opened for sepoys at Myitkyina, Bhamo, Taunggyi and Pyawbwe, and schools for the children of sepoys at Myitkyina, Pyawbwe and Taunggyi.

The schools for workers' children shown in the list were opened by the Companies in areas where educational facilities did not exist or where a special type of school was required. All are now recognised by the Education Department and receive grants from Government or from the Local Education Authorities except the vernacular schools of the Burma Oil Company in Yenangyaung and Chauk which are wholly financed by the Company. The Burma Oil Company also employs an Inspector of Schools to supervise its schools.

In areas where the Companies have not provided special education facilities, there is provision for the education of the children of workers in the ordinary schools recognised by the Department.

#### LIST OF SCHOOLS.—(i) and (ii) For Adult Workers and Half-Time Workers.

	Number on Roll in 1928-29.	Approximate contribution by Company in 1928-29.	Rs.
The Burma Oil Company Indian Night School, Syriam. (This school was registered last year by the Education Department as a night school and received a grant-in-aid of Rs. 720 from Government.)	From 80 to 100.		

#### (iii) For Workers' Children.

##### (a) By the Burma Railways—

1. Railway English Girls' School, Insein .. .. .	97	3,500
2. Railway English Girls' School, Yamethin .. .. .	52	1,650
3. Railway Anglo-Vernacular Tamil, Burmese and Hindustani Boys' School, Insein .. .. .	185	5,800
4. Railway Anglo-Vernacular School, Myitnge .. .. .	174	2,700

The above schools opened by the Railway Company are now recognised by the Education Department and receive maintenance grants. The expense of maintenance is thus shared equally by Government and the Railway Company. The buildings and equipment were provided by the Company.

##### (b) By the Burma Oil Company—

1. The Indian Anglo-Vernacular School, Syriam .. .. .	90	2,400
2. St. George's English School, Syriam .. .. .	166	2,400
3. The Burma Oil Company Vernacular School, Myenikhin (Yenangyaung Township) .. .. .	200	..
4. The Burma Oil Company Vernacular School, Twingon (Yenangyaung Township) .. .. .	171	..
5. The Burma Oil Company Vernacular School, Bame (Yenangyaung Township) .. .. .	180	..
6. The Burma Oil Company Vernacular School, Nyaungghla (Yenangyaung Township) .. .. .	157	..
7. The Burma Oil Company Tamil School, Nyaungghla (Yenangyaung Township) .. .. .	63	..
8. The Burma Oil Company Vernacular School, Khanganon (Yenangyaung Township) .. .. .	72	..

	Number on Roll in 1928-29.	Approximate contribution by Company in 1928-29. Rs.
9. } 10. } 11. } Three Burma Oil Company Schools at Chauk, Sale Town- ship.	{ 70 80 89	{ .. .. ..
The Burma Oil Company Vernacular Schools in Yenang-yaung and Sale Townships are entirely financed by the Company which also provides an Inspector of Schools.		
The Indian Anglo-Vernacular School is under the direct management of the Company. St. George's English School is run by the Church of England Mission and receives from the Company a monthly grant of Rs. 200.		

## (c) By the Bombay-Burma Trading Corporation :—

1. Bombay-Burma Trading Corporation Anglo-Vernacular School, Dalla, Rangoon .. .. .	110	4,425
This school was recognised by Government and receives a maintenance grant.		

## (d) By the Burma Corporation :—

1. Federated Shan States' Anglo-Vernacular School, Namtu ..	90	(Received a subsidy of Rs. 1,000 per annum from Company.)
2. Burma Corporation's English School, Bawdwin. The latter school has recently been opened. Particulars are not yet known.		

(iv) *Extent to which used.*—To judge from the attendance the employees fully avail themselves of the opportunities offered by the Companies.

## VI.—Education.

40. (i) A note on the education facilities offered by Industrial Companies for the children of their employees is given under V.—Welfare (36) (iii) above. In areas where the Companies have not provided schools there is accommodation for the children of workers in the ordinary schools.

(ii) The latest statistics of children employed in factories are those of 1926-27; the Chief Inspector of Factories, Burma, reported there were 1,340 children employed in factories in that year. He was not aware of any special educational facilities provided by factory owners. It is presumed that most of the children were employed for light work in rice mills or in small weaving factories.

(iii) Outside Rangoon there is little demand for adult education.

During the past year there were 20 registered night schools in Rangoon, with a total attendance of 2,034 students. These schools are managed by private societies or *Sanghas* and are attended chiefly by Indians of various callings, mechanics, police, motor-drivers, bill peons, etc. Nearly all communities, viz., Tamils, Telugus, Oriya, Bengali, Mahomedans, Hindus and Burmese are represented. In most of the schools a little English is taught.

41. Full details of the facilities appended for Industrial and Vocational training are given in Chapter VII of the Annual Report on Public Instruction for 1927-28.

42. No statistics have been collected on this subject, but it is apparent to any visitor to the industrial areas that there has been a rise in the standard of living of the Burman industrial labourers in the last decade; among Indian coolies there appears to be no marked change. The rise in the standard of living is due to good pay and not to improved education.

Mr. C. INNES, O.B.E., B.Sc., M. INST. C.E., M.I.E., DEPUTY CHIEF ENGINEER,  
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT, BURMA, BUILDINGS AND ROADS BRANCH.

## I.—Recruitment.

1. (a) *Government Labour.*—In Central Burma labour is mainly local recruited; in Southern Burma the unskilled labour comes principally from Madras; and in Northern Burma most of the unskilled labour is obtained from the local tribes and China.

Carpenters, as a rule, are Chinese; and masons Indians, but near the Chinese Frontier good Chinese masons are obtainable.

Engine drivers generally are Indians; and other skilled labour is obtained from locally trained Burmans or Indians permanently domiciled in Burma.

(b) *Contractors' Labour*.—Except in Central Burma, contractors are nearly all Indian and Chinese who employ Indian and Chinese labour.

1. (i) Government labour does not migrate to any extent, but the labour of contractors is largely migratory to India.

2. (i) A portion of the Chinese and Indian labour returns to its villages at intervals in order to cultivate fields.

(ii) No statistics have been collected, but the permanent labour force of the Buildings and Roads Branch is estimated at about 10,000 unskilled and 1,000 skilled labourers. Contractors' permanent labour is probably not more than half these figures.

3. (i) As the demand occurs the supply usually is met without any special arrangements by Government.

(ii) Existing arrangements are satisfactory.

(iii) The necessity for any change has not been felt.

## II.—Organisation.

14. (i) The record of attendance of labour is made on a Muster Roll kept as a rule by the head man of the gang and, when possible, checked daily by the departmental staff.

(ii) Wages are paid in cash by the Sub-divisional Officer.

15. (i) Works of every description are given out on contract whenever possible.

(ii) The different classes of work which make up a project usually are sublet to petty contractors, but subletting to a greater extent is prohibited by the conditions of contract.

(iii) Contractors' labour is subject to the same medical and sanitary regulations as Government labour, wherever this is practicable, otherwise it is entirely under the control of the contractors.

## III.—Housing.

16. (i) Contractors house their labour temporarily when necessary.

(ii) Government houses its labour either permanently or temporarily when necessary.

(iv) Casual labour often houses itself temporarily.

18. Most of Government's labour is employed outside towns.

(i) The workers seem satisfied with Government accommodation.

(ii) Permanent wooden huts, allowing usually 40 square feet per man, with floors raised off the ground and attached cook houses, or temporary mat and thatch huts of similar construction, are provided as a rule.

(iii) Natural lighting is obtained by means of batten or mat doors and windows. No artificial lighting is provided. Conservancy in the jungle is unnecessary. These huts are always sited near a suitable water supply.

19. The accommodation provided is always used.

20. No rents are charged.

## IV.—Health.

24. (ii) Government provides medicines, and in the case of large works special medical arrangements are made in accordance with P. W. D. Code, Volume I, paragraph 264 (Annexure).

25. (i) The medical facilities provided by Government are fully utilised.

26. (i) Pit latrines are provided when necessary.

(ii) A source of supply for drinking water is always provided.

(iii) No special bathing or washing facilities are provided except in or near towns, as natural facilities usually exist in most places.

29. (ii) Malaria is frequent, but cholera cases only very occasionally occur.

## VII.—Safety.

44. The appendices to the Buildings and Roads Yearly Administration Reports give the accidents which have occurred in connection with electrical installations. The number of accidents at the Government Quarries, Mokpalin, has been ten during the last five years of which three have been fatal.

**VIII.—Workmen's Compensation Act.**

51. There have been three cases in which compensation has had to be paid during the last five years. Of these, two cases occurred at the Mokpalin Government Quarries:

**IX.—Hours.**

78. An eight-hour day is universal with Government labour.

79. Sundays are free, but where there are five-day bazaars, bazaar days are free.

**XII.—Wages.**

96. Unskilled labour is paid from Rs. 15 to Rs. 30 per month and skilled labour from Rs. 50 to Rs. 100.

97. The increased percentage in wages since the War has varied from 30 to 50.

98. Figures obtained from local Post Offices indicate that considerable amounts are remitted to India by Money Order; and in one case 75 per cent. of the wages is recorded as having been so remitted.

99. Where there are no bazaars and food supplies cannot be obtained, such as in the Putao district, payment is made partially or wholly in kind.

100. Government labour is paid direct.

101. Wages are fixed by custom, and in special cases by negotiation.

102. See reply to 79. Overtime payment is exceptional and is arranged by negotiation.

106. (i) Fining for neglect of duty is a recognised custom, but is exercised to a very small extent.

(ii) There are no other deductions.

(iii) Fines are automatically credited to the work.

107. (i) Government wages are paid monthly except in the case of casual labour which is paid weekly or at shorter intervals.

(ii) The month's wages are paid within the first ten days of the ensuing month.

(iv) Unclaimed wages are credited to the work.

**XIII.—Efficiency.**

112. No improvement has been apparent in recent years.

**ANNEXURE.**

*Extract from Public Works Department Code, Volume I.*

**VIII.—Sanitary Rules on Extensive Works.**

264. A set of special rules framed by the Inspector-General of Civil Hospitals, Burma, is included in Appendix XII and it is the duty of the Superintending Engineer to see that these rules are carried out.

Any reasonable outlay in this connection on account of sheds for workpeople, water supply, drainage, conservancy, hospital establishments or Police, may be authorised as forming part of the contingent outlay on the work under execution.

**MESSRS. BULLOCH BROS, & Co., LTD., AGENTS, BRITISH INDIA STEAM NAVIGATION Co., LTD., RANGOON.**  
**MEMORANDUM DATED THE 23RD SEPTEMBER 1929.**

**I.—Recruitment.**

1. (i) The labourers employed in loading and discharging the Company's steamers are Indians from the Coromandel Coast of India.

(ii) These labourers immigrate to Rangoon in very large numbers during the Burma harvest-ing season, i.e., November-February and incidentally some obtain employment with the Company.

2. (i) The majority after having saved their earnings return to India within a few months. The rest who are less thrifty postpone their departure until savings are greater.

(ii) A very small percentage of these immigrants owing to continued employment in the Company and also to certain ties formed here have settled here more or less permanently. They hardly ever return to the land of their birth.

3. (i) This Company does not recruit labour in India.  
 7. (i) All our labour is of the casual type.  
 8. (i) Casual labour—duration cannot be computed.  
 (ii) The Company employs on an average 510 labourers per day and 420 per night.

## II.—Staff Organisation.

10. The Cargo Department is in charge of a Cargo Superintendent and an Assistant Cargo Superintendent. -The Cargo Superintendent posts labour to the various ships in proportion to the amount of cargo to be handled. The labourers under the charge of the Head Maistry assisted by his Clerk are sent by launch to the steamers. The Head Maistry and his Clerk are on monthly salary.

11. The Cargo Superintendent is a Commander in the Company's service and the Assistant Cargo Superintendent holds the rank of Chief Officer.

12. (i) The Supervising Staff of the labour on board steamers consists of men who have been promoted from the grade of Tally Clerk. Each of the Supervisors has over 10 years' service with the Company.

13. (i) Relations between staff and file are generally very good.

14. (i) These are kept by the Head Maistry and checked by the Cargo Superintendent.

(ii) Wages are paid by the Cargo Superintendent to each Gang Maistry who pays the gang.

15. (i) One firm of Stevedoring Contractors is employed by the Company, and a small percentage of the loading of Company's steamers is done by them.

(iii) The labourers are supplied by the Contractors but their work is supervised by the Company's staff.

## IV.—Health.

23. (v) The physique of the workers is average and their general health is good.

(vi) Overcrowding in tenement houses occupied by labourers is very common owing chiefly to their thrifty nature. This is an evil which calls for legislation, for if allowed to continue is liable seriously to impair the health of the workers.

24. (i) The Company provide medical attention in case of accident or sudden illness while on duty.

(ii) Government provide free hospital treatment in all cases of sickness or accident for which services this Company pay them an annual subscription of Rs. 500.

26. (i) Ample latrine accommodation is provided on all the Company's steamers.

(ii) and (iii). A plentiful supply of water is obtainable on the steamers for drinking and washing purposes.

## VII.—Safety.

45. Accidents on board steamers are most commonly the result of carelessness of the workmen in not keeping clear of slings of cargo, both on deck and in the hold.

48. First-aid is always rendered on board in case of an accident.

## VIII.—Workmen's Compensation.

51. (i) Compensation is claimed in all cases of accident except trivial ones.

## IX.—Hours.

78. (i) Hours worked per day are ten.\*

79. Days worked per week are five or six.

## XII.—Wages.

						Rs. A. P.
96. (i)	A Cooly is paid ..	..	..	..	..	1 8 0 per day.
	A Stower is paid ..	..	..	..	..	1 13 0 "
	A Gang Maistry is paid ..	..	..	..	..	1 13 0 "
	A Winchman is paid ..	..	..	..	..	2 2 0 "
	A Dock Maistry is paid ..	..	..	..	..	2 12 0 "

1. (ii) The rates of wages paid to workers are those ruling at the port of Rangoon.

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have be.

Corrected as 11 hours during oral evidence, vide Part II—M-3518-A.

102. No overtime is earned by labourers as separate gangs for day and night work are supplied to steamers. Labourers who work on Sunday are paid the same rates as those who work during the week.

106. (i) No fines are inflicted.

(ii) There are no deductions from workmen's wages.

107. (i) Workmen's wages are computed weekly.

(ii) One week elapses before payment.

109. (i) The payment of a gratuity or bonus has the effect of speeding up loading.

(ii) A gang of workmen loading rice are paid in addition to their wages a gratuity as follows:—

	Rs.
If over 1,900 bags shipped day or night .. .. .	2
If over 2,300 bags shipped day or night .. .. .	3
If over 2,800 bags shipped day or night .. .. .	4
If over 3,000 bags shipped day or night .. .. .	5

110. (i) As our labour is of the casual type there are no leave rules in force.

### XV.—Industrial Disputes.

123. (i) A strike of workmen occurred in 1924 due to the machinations of agitators.

(ii) It lasted for three weeks.

(iii) The strikers returned to work on the same rates of wages as paid previously.

(iv) Loss to industry was negligible and the workers lost three weeks' wages.

## THE MANAGER, IRRAWADDY FLOTILLA COMPANY, LIMITED, RANGOON,

MEMORANDUM, DATED THE 30TH SEPTEMBER 1929.

### I.—Recruitment.

1. (i) *Areas of recruitment.*—Chittagong and Dacca.

2. *Frequency of leave.*—*Certificated Serangs, Serunnies, Drivers and Tindals.*—Up to 8 months without pay after each year's work. After two years' work up to 8 months granted with free passage and one month's pay.

*Crews.*—As arranged by Serangs and Drivers.

3. *Methods of recruitment of seamen, as distinct from masters.*—Recruited by Serangs and Drivers.

7. *Unemployment.*—*Certificated Serangs, Serunnies, Drivers and Tindals.*—Approximately 5.3% of the total number of these are unemployed.

*Other ratings.*—Employment varies. When not on vessels, usually find other employment, cultivation, mills, etc.

8. *Duration of employment.*—*Serangs Drivers.*—Continuous.

*Other Ratings.*—A few are at times paid off from vessels being laid up at slack periods.

### II.—Staff Organisation.

11. Marine Superintendent, Superintending Engineer, and a Senior Office Assistant are selected from the European Marine, Engineering, and Office Staffs according to qualifications.

12. (i) and (ii) The Subordinate Supervising Staff consists of qualified European Marine and Engineering Officers. All the Indian Serangs and Drivers who officer vessels are recruited from Deck and Engine Room Crews. Suitable men are encouraged and assisted to obtain certificates qualifying them for promotion. Crews are trained under European Commanders, Officers and Engineers, and under Serangs, and Drivers in the course of their employment.

13. (i) Serangs, Serunnies and Drivers, and Tindals are in constant touch with, and interviewed by, the Supervising and Managing Staff. The lower ratings are entirely under the control of the Serangs, and Drivers, and are in most cases their relations or townsmen. At the same time the Managing and Supervising Staff are always available in case of grievances between lower and higher ratings.

15. *Extent of use of contractors for transport purposes, e.g., at steamer stations.*—All loading and discharging is done by outside labour. When receiving bag cargoes, crews do stowage work in holds. Vessels being adequately manned to allow for this.

#### IV.—Health.

23. Health conditions excellent.

24. (i) and (ii) Attention to illness and injuries are provided by the many Hospitals and Dispensaries to which employers subscribe.

25. Medical facilities fully utilized.

27. Frequent inspection by employer's agents, supervising and travelling staffs. All sanitary arrangements, drinking water, crews quarters, etc., receive special attention.

#### V.—Welfare.

The nature of the employment makes welfare work impracticable, but a house is provided where Serangs, Secunnies, Drivers and Tindals may live rent free while awaiting employment.

#### IX.—Hours.

78. Conditions under which services are conducted make it difficult to give a definite daily period of work or to define "working hours". Tides, fogs, channels, groundings all affect number of hours worked, none of our vessels run continuously for any length of time and few run outside the hours of daylight.

Services vary in length, and vessels get transferred from one to the other of which some are longer at one period of the year than at another; speed of vessel employed, quantity of cargo carried, time occupied in loading and discharging, etc., all influence working hours. Certain vessels with continuous running hours have a complete rest day or more between each short trip or else have extra relief men on board. On Inland Steam Vessels work in the Deck Department is ordinarily carried out on the system that all hands turn to when there is work for all, but when steaming or at terminal ports only portions of the crew are called on to perform the few duties necessary for the safety and comfort of all on board. Crews bring rarely their families to this country and live on board their vessels, and "spread over" time cannot therefore be defined. In the engine room on large steamers regular watches of four hours are kept, but on smaller vessels the driver simply relieves men as most convenient.

After allowing for all the varying conditions mentioned, it is estimated that our Native crews work almost nine hours per day for six days per week but as vessels are manned on a generous scale, certain members of the crew are to be found asleep at any part of the nine hours working day.

#### XII.—Wages.

96. *Prevailing rates of wages and earnings.*—*Serangs.*—Rs. 46-8-0 to Rs. 151-8-0 per month.

*Drivers.*—Rs. 46-8-0 to Rs. 106-8-0 per month.

*Secunnies.*—Rs. 35-8-0 per month.

*Tindals.*—Rs. 35-8-0 per month.

In addition to the above, Serangs on certain services or work draw commission. Maximum Rs. 75-0-0 per month. *Lascars* Rs. 25-8-0, *Firemen* Rs. 30-8-0, *Coalman* Rs. 25-8-0.

97. *Movements in recent years.*—Increased by 30 per cent. in some cases, to 50 per cent. in others since 1919.

103. Pay of all grades is standardized.

106. (i) *Deductions.*—Fining occurs only very occasionally.

(ii) *Other deductions.*—Only for value of cargo missing or pilfered and for damage done.

(iii) *Utilization of fines.*—To make good losses involved.

107. (i) *Periods for which wages paid.*—Monthly.

(ii) *Period elapsing before payment.*—10/15 days.

(iv) *Treatment of unclaimed wages.*—Only arises in case of death in which case payment is made to next of kin.

108. No indebtedness to employers, and rarely, it is believed, is this class of employee indebted privately.

VII. *Types of contract in use between employer and labour for employees not certificated under the Inland Steam Vessels Act.*—No contract with uncertificated employees who are chosen and appointed by Serangs and Drivers.

*Note.*—The above notes do not apply to the crews of dumb barges and flats.

IRRAWADDY FLOTILLA Co., LTD., SUPPLEMENTARY MEMORANDUM DEALING WITH FLATS, CARGO BOATS AND DUMB BARGES, DATED THE 13TH NOVEMBER 1930.

### I.—Recruitment.

1. *Areas of Recruitment.*—Chittagong Coramandel Coast—Cargo Boatmen.
2. *Frequency of leave.*—Flat Serangs and Tindals go on leave generally every 3 years Lascars have no set times going on leave.
3. *Methods of recruitment of seamen, as distinct from masters.*—No definite scheme for recruitment. Men apply for work in Rangoon and are engaged as required.
7. *Unemployment.*—Depends entirely on the cargo being carried. If no cargo is being handled, Flats and Cargo Boats are not required and are consequently laid up and crews paid off.
8. *Duration of employment.*—Serangs and Tindals continuous, but other members of the crews irregular, according to traffic being handled.

### II.—Staff Organisation.

12. Each Marine Superintendent has a Gunner who was formerly a Super-cargo afloat with riverine experience. These men however merely assist the Marine Superintendents and have no authority over the crews.

Men start as Lascars and as vacancies occur in the ranks of Serangs or Tindals these are filled from senior Lascars.

13. (i) Serangs and Tindals take order direct from Marine Superintendents, Commanders and Agents, but the rank and file take orders direct from Serangs and Tindals.

15. *Extent of use of contractors for transport purposes, e.g., at steamer stations.*—Crews do not handle cargo but merely tally all cargo and stow bags which have to be loaded into holds.

### IV.—Health.

24. *Extent of Medical facilities provided.*—None; but all employees when necessary are treated at any of the Riverine Hospitals to which the Company freely contributes.

27. *Extent and nature of official supervision.*—Their living quarters on board are frequently inspected and special attention is given to the sanitary arrangements, provision for drinking water and cooking facilities.

### XII.—Wages.

96. <i>Prevailing rates of wages and earnings—</i>					Rs.	A.	P.
Flats Serangs	..	—	..	..	..	41	8 0 per month
Flats Secunnies	—	—	—	—	—	35	8 0 „
Flats Lascars	..	—	—	—	—	25	8 0 „
Cargo Boat Tindals	..	—	..	—	..	30	8 0 „
Cargo Boat Lascars	..	—	—	..	..	25	8 0 „

97. *Movement in recent years.*—Last increased in October 1920, when increase amounting to 50% were received by the Lascars, 42 per cent. by the Secunnies and 38·3 per cent. by the Serangs.

#### 106. *Deductions—*

- (i) *Extent of fining.*—Only very occasionally.
- (ii) *Other deductions.*—Fines levied for shortage of cargo (i.e., cargo disappearing after being tallied and when in charge of crew) or loss of gear.
- (iii) *Utilization of fines.*—To make good losses as above.

#### 107. *Periods of wage-payment—*

- (i) *Periods for which wages paid.*—Monthly.
- (ii) *Period elapsing before payment.*—10/15 days.

108. *Indebtedness.*—No indebtedness to employers and very few cases of indebtedness to outsiders come to the notice of the Company.

**THE BURMA OIL COMPANY, LIMITED (SCOTLAND),**  
**GENERAL MEMORANDUM, DATED THE 4TH JANUARY 1930.**

*History of the Company.*—We may first be permitted to give a brief résumé of the history of the Company.

In 1871 a Company was formed in Glasgow for the purpose of erecting Works for the distillation and refining of the crude earth oil of Burma. At this time the source of supply of the Crude Oil—shallow hand dug wells—was within the territory of and under the control of the King of Burma, and the impossibility of treating for regular supplies on reasonable terms soon made the position of the Company untenable. A further attempt was made to carry on working in 1876 and, from that year to 1886, the Works were extended and improved so that they were capable of dealing with 200,000 gallons of Crude Oil per month. In the latter year King Theebaw was deposed and his territory annexed. The Indian Government fell heir to the King's personal oil wells and oil well sites, but recognised the then existing private rights of ownership of the Twinzayoes, who held hereditary rights to all well sites in the native Reserves of Twingone and Beme, and their oil wells and oil well sites were preserved to them, subject only to the State's royalty on production. The Company then proceeded to secure its position by acquiring leases of well sites from the Twinzayoes and lands in and around the Reserved Areas of Twingone and Beme. The well sites of the Twinzayoes and the oil lands of King Theebaw all fall within the two areas known as the Twingone and Beme Reserves. The Oil sites consist of circles of 60' diameter. The great majority of them are held by the Burmah Oil Company but at different times some have been held and worked by ten other Companies. The other areas shown on the map are held *in toto* by the Burmah Oil Company on lease from Government. Having secured their holdings in Yenangyaung the Company's next step was to develop them by modern methods. Up till then, drilling had been by hand sunk shafts. In 1889 the first machine drilled well was completed and that date may be taken as the real beginning of the Industry on modern lines. Since that year progress has been steadily made in Oil field development accompanied, step by step, with increased refining and marketing facilities till today the Crude Oil handled monthly by the Company has increased since 1889 by 8000 per cent. Additional oil lands and potential oil lands have been acquired and are being developed by the Company, including portions of the Yenangyat, Singu and Minbu Oilfields in Burma and the Budderpore Oil Company in Lower Assam, and numerous prospecting areas throughout Burma and India. In 1908 the Company connected their producing centre at Yenangyaung with their refineries at Syriam by means of a 10 inch pipe line some 275 miles long. In 1922 the Company converted their field of operations at Yenangyaung to electrical power thus introducing the most up-to-date methods known to the industry. Under a co-operative scheme electrical energy has been made available to other operators. The Singu Field is now in process of Electrification. The Refineries are situated at Syriam about 5 miles south of Rangoon. Here the whole of the plant has recently been reconstructed and concentrated, and all the latest improvements installed. From there the products are pumped to tank steamers at moorings in the Rangoon river and carried to the main ports of India. The quota required for Burma is barged to an installation at Dunneedaw at the southern end of Rangoon Town and distributed thence by rail, steamer, sailing junks and lorry throughout the Province. Our total labour therefore is thus employed in several separate areas.

(1) Under the control of our Headquarters at Yenangyaung there is the labour employed at (a) All the Burma Oil Fields; (b) the main Yenangyaung-Rangoon Pipe Line; (2) Syriam Refinery; (3) Dunneedaw Installation; (4) Badarpur Oil Field; (5) Chittagong Installation; (6) Akyab Installation—a small outstation from No. 5 actually situated in Burma.

The Company's policy towards its labour is the same in all areas, and conditions differ only according to the locality. Thus in the Oilfields, which are situated at the best near a medium sized mofussil town, the Company have had to create facilities such as schools, hospitals, etc. At the Refineries, however, which are close to Rangoon and in a populous district, they have contributed in a large measure to the erection, enlargement and maintenance of such facilities as have been provided from time to time by Government, Municipal Agency, or private enterprise.

## II.—Staff Organisation.

10. The Company's Administrative Offices in the East are situated in Rangoon, Yenangyaung, Chittagong and Badarpur. Each is under the direct control of the London Office of the Company, the latter being represented in India by a General Manager. The Offices at Yenangyaung and Badarpur administer the Burma and Lower Assam Oilfields respectively. The Chittagong Office is in charge of marketing the Company's products in Eastern Bengal and part of Assam. The Rangoon Office has charge of the Refineries and tank steamers and of the marketing of products in Burma.

#### IV.—Health.

30. At present our labour receive free medical attention during periods of sickness; even so we find that many Burmans prefer to attend their own doctors. We consider that they would receive no more,—but probably less—benefits should any insurance scheme be introduced and, in any case, we are of opinion that the conditions of labour in this country and the lack of associations, such as are to be found in the United Kingdom for the administration of such benefits, render the introduction of any scheme of sickness insurance undesirable.

#### V.—Welfare.

37. Originally this Company rewarded long service by awarding pensions to those of its employees who had served them for 25 years. On 1st January 1919, a Provident Fund was started for all members whose pay ranged from Rs. 30 to Rs. 200 per month. After 31st December 1929 no pensions will be granted to employees who are eligible for Membership of this Fund. Under this Scheme the employee contributes one month's salary in instalments per year to the fund and the Company adds a like contribution at the end of the year; all balances carry interest at 5 per cent. per annum. Although at first employees were slow to realise the advantage of this Scheme, perhaps due to the native suspicion of any innovation, membership increased steadily till at 1st January 1929, there were 3,570 members with accumulated funds of Rs. 18,97,404-1-0. It has now been decided to invest the Fund outside the Company and administer it by a separate Trust Company. It has also been decided in order to obtain the benefits of the Indian Income Tax (Provident Fund Relief) Act of 1929 that this Fund should conform to the conditions necessary for recognition by Government.

#### VIII.—Workmen's Compensation.

On the enactment of the Workmen's Compensation Act which was not originally applicable to this Company's employees, the Burmah Oil Company voluntarily applied its schedule to all its employees earning less than Rs. 300 per month. When Government later notified the application of the Act to certain classes of our workers—about 60 per cent.—the Company continued to treat its whole labour force alike. Our experience of the Act has so far been too short to judge its effects. Several Insurance Companies in Burma cater for this form of insurance. The Burmah Oil Company arranges its insurance internally. We consider that where an employer's resources are limited, insurance is desirable to safeguard the employee's interests. We do not think, however, that external insurance should be made compulsory to all employers. If it is decided that legislation for compulsory insurance is to be enacted, provision should in our opinion be made for the exemption of employers whose resources are ample to meet all probable claims. We consider that the Act could with advantage be extended to all organised industries in India. We consider the scales and conditions governing the grant of compensation quite suitable but would like to see the term "Industrial diseases" more clearly defined; a competent medical practitioner should be the sole judge as to whether or not a disease is due to the nature of the employment. The greatest advantage in the payment of compensation, particularly in the case of death, lies in prompt payment and we should therefore like to see the machinery of Administration of the Act considerably speeded up. With this end in view we suggest that (1) Commissioners under the Act should be Government Officials living in industrial areas; (2) Commissioners should be easily approachable so that in undisputed cases, where the employer has deposited compensation, there should be no necessity for the claimant to employ legal assistance; (3) there should be no delay in settlement of undisputed claims; (4) in cases of permanent partial disablement, where the claimant has accepted the compensation offered, there should be no suggestion that he is compelled to attend before the Commissioner and signify his approval before the Commissioner will register the memorandum of agreement; (5) in cases of compensation for death, where the workman has been killed in one province and his dependants live in another, and the names and addresses of the dead man and his dependants have been supplied by the employer, there should be no delay in paying the compensation to the dependants in the province in which they live.

#### XII.—Wages.

105. At all our centres there is an ample supply of labour and there is considerable evidence that the minima paid are satisfactory. In the present state of industrial development of India, with the varying standards of living of the various races and castes, we consider that any attempt to fix minimum wages by statute throughout India is undesirable and indeed impracticable.

## MEMORANDUM DEALING WITH LABOUR CONDITIONS AT THE OIL FIELDS.

## I.—Recruitment.

1. (i) About 47 per cent. of the labour employed representing 8,098 men is Burman, the balance is classified below :—

Race.	Province.	Numbers.
Telugus .. .. .	Madras .. .. .	2,717
Uriyas .. .. .	Behar and Orissa .. .. .	2,856
	Madras .. .. .	
Hindustanis .. .. .	United Provinces .. .. .	1,567
Chittagonians .. .. .	Bengal .. .. .	904
Chinese .. .. .	.. .. .	43
Others .. .. .	.. .. .	1,069

(ii) Telugus, Uriyas, Chittagonians and Hindustanis have been attracted to the Oilfields by the rates of pay obtainable. Our men of these classes come from groups of villages and there is little doubt that workmen returning from the Oilfields spread news about the pay and conditions in the Oilfields.

(iii) No changes are noticeable in the past 5 years. The times of the yearly exodus, just before and after the monsoon, have not changed.

2. (i) No statistics are available, but it is estimated that 80 per cent. of the Burman Workmen live with their families near the Oilfields. The majority of the Indians return to their homes at least once every three years.

(ii) *Extent of permanent labour force.*—17,254 as at August 31st, 1929.

3. (i) Men seeking employment register their names at the Labour Bureaux. Requisitions are sent to the Labour Bureaux by departments requiring labour. On receipt of the requisition the Labour Bureau selects men from its registers in priority of registration, with due regard to nationality and qualifications, to fill the vacancy. Skilled men are medically examined before engagement by the Company's Medical Officer. This is our only method of engaging workmen and we are able to obtain all the labour we require.

(ii) *Possible improvement.*—Existing arrangement is quite satisfactory.

(iii) *Public Employment Agencies.*—Not necessary for the Oilfields.

4. *Extent and effects of disturbance of family life.*—No statistics, but an estimate of the extent of disturbance of family life is given below :—

4,320 Unmarried Indians with families in India .. 25 per cent. of the Payroll.

4,320 Married Indians with families in India .. 25 per cent. of the Payroll.

860 Burmans living away from their families .. 5 per cent. of the Payroll.

The balance of 8,880 Burmans and 860 Indians are living with their families.

No marked or persistent effects are noticeable so far as life and habits of the Indian coolie working in Burma are concerned. Many Indian employees come to the Oilfields to earn money to assist their families at home and in these cases the disturbance of family life is seemingly for the ultimate benefit of those left in the village. Racial and family ties are very strong and Indian employees whether married or single only in very rare instances form attachments with the women of Burma leading to permanent settlement here.

7. (i) No statistics are available but the Labour Bureaux have a daily average of 1,500 men on their registers seeking employment. About 20 per cent. of these registrations become invalid after 14 days owing to the men having left the neighbourhood.

(ii) There are other factors besides the numbers discharged accounting for local unemployment. Floods in an irrigated area caused crowds of destitute cultivators or their sons to try their luck in the Oilfields. A failure of the rains in other years had similar effects. For the past three or four years the numbers employed showed a steady increase and gave the impression in centres far from our control that employment in the Oilfields was easily obtainable. This year the expansion stopped and a steady but gradual reduction took place. The present unemployment is not so much due to the number of men reduced as to our inability to absorb the new comers who continue to arrive. So soon as the jungle Burman and the Telegu and Ooriyah realise that employment is not so easy to obtain the numbers of new men coming to the Oilfields will fall off.

The records and particulars of all men who registered for employment between August 1st and 15th, 1929, are classified below :—

	New men.	Retrenchment.	Discharged.	Re-fired.	Other Reasons.	Total.
1. New men .. .. .	431	..	..	..	..	431
2. Men who have been employed, left and applied again for work after an absence of less than 6 months .. .. .	..	124	103	46	35	308
3. As in 2 but over 6 months and under one year .. .. .	..	16	22	35	16	89
4. As in 2 and 3 but over one year and under two years .. .. .	..	23	26	75	12	136
5. Over two years .. .. .	..	12	12	66	9	99
<b>Total ..</b>	<b>431</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>222</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>1,063</b>

"Other reasons" include, men long absent, unsuitable men, men unwilling to continue at work in one department and applying for work in another, and those whose card passes allowing them to work in the Oilfields have been cancelled by the Warden of the Oilfields.

Retrenchment and dismissals account for about	..	32 per cent. of those registered for employment.
Retirements account for about	..	21 per cent. of those registered for employment.
Other reasons account for about	..	7 per cent. of those registered for employment.
New men account for about	..	40 per cent. of those registered for employment.

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(iii) It is hoped that this local distress, which at the time of writing (October 1929) is not serious, will right itself with time.

(iv) *Unemployment Insurance*.—Not desirable.

8. (i) No useful figures can be given of the relation of length of service among workmen to numbers at present employed. It has been observed that skilled labour stays in many cases for many years while general unskilled labour is migratory. When coolies become even semi-skilled and by a little experience or ability obtain particular jobs there is a tendency to stay for a year or so. The average monthly discharges and retirements for 1928 for all causes were 8 per cent. of the total payroll.

(ii) *Extent of casual employment*.—Negligible, i.e., for the whole of 1928, 2,438 men days.

(iii) (a) The absence of workmen, apart from absence for sickness or injury, is voluntary and is usually for one or two days.

Daily total average of absentees	..	4 per cent. of those employed.
Daily average absent for medical treatment	..	1.22 per cent. of those employed.
Daily average absent for injury	..	.59 per cent. of those employed.
Daily average absent for other causes	..	2.19 per cent. of those employed.

The principal causes of absenteeism apart from illness or injury are death or illness of relations, family affairs, sickness (for which the workmen prefer indigenous medicine rather than Western treatment), weather and amusements.

(b) Men going on leave or men resigning to go home are struck off the payroll and paid up before going. They are not classed as "absentees".

(c) Times lost 690 men days per day on an average payroll of 17,254 men, earning about Rs. 1.8-0 per day.

Wages lost to the workmen in round figures estimated at Rs. 800 per day less Rs. 350 paid in sick or injured pay.

## II.—Staff Organisation.

10. For convenience of management the Companies' spheres of oil winning activities in Burma are divided into two main areas—Yenangyaung and Singu—with an Agent in executive charge of each and responsible to an Assistant General Manager (in India) of the Company, whose Head Quarters are at Yenangyaung. Each area has its own organisation of departments such as Drilling Production, Geological, Engineering, Electrification, Stores and Labour Welfare with Heads responsible to the respective Agent of the area. Co-ordination is secured by having Superin-

tendents for each department who act in an advisory capacity to the Assistant General Manager in India and, in conjunction with the Agents, exercise control so far as may be necessary in the interest of co-ordination, over Heads of their respective departments in each area.

12. (i) As America is the home of the " Oil Industry " all of our supervising staff were originally drawn from that country. In recent years efforts have been made, with some success, to train Britishers to this work. Burmans are being encouraged to shoulder more responsibility but their progress is very slow. Several are now, however, taking on work originally done by Americans though only in one case, has one been found capable of being placed in charge of even a small field.

(ii) Burman drillers are recruited as raw hands on the derrick floor at Rs. 1-2-6 a day and are promoted by ability to positions varying according to responsibility from Rs. 125 to Rs. 175 a month. There are about 100 posts of this description. Wall pulling supervisors on Rs. 125 a month are promoted from men who started as coolies on Rs. 1-2-6 a day.

Machinists are graded and are promoted to higher grades according to ability.

(iv) *Works Councils and Industrial Councils.*—There are two Workers Councils. One composed of Burman employees for dealing with points affecting Burman workmen : the other of Indian employees for Indian questions. These Councils meet at regular intervals, they are presided over by the Labour Superintendent. The minutes of the meetings together with recommendations or reports of grievances are forwarded to the Management by the Labour Superintendent.

14. (i) Timekeeping for workmen is carried out through the common system of hanging metal tokens on a board when coming to or going from work. Timekeeping is under the control of a separate department. Time sheets are forwarded to the Wages Department which is separate from and independent of the Timekeeping Department.

The time of clerks and supervisors is kept departmentally.

(ii) Wages are paid by a section of the Accounts Department called the Wages Department.

Two days before pay-day pay vouchers are sent to the heads of each department by the Wages Department for issue to the men. The pay vouchers give details of the time worked, rates of pay and deductions and the amount payable. The workmen produce these vouchers at their Godowns and in exchange their pay is counted out to them by an European paymaster.

15. (i) Contractors are used as intermediaries between ourselves and labour principally in regard to construction work classified as follows :—

(a) Timber work.

(b) Steel oil/water tanks, dismantling and re-erecting.

(c) Earth work, soiling and metalling of new roads and maintenance of such roads.

(d) Masonary to a small extent.

(ii) Sub-contracting exists but we take no cognisance of it.

(iii) On occasions we erect quarters for contractors' labour. In all cases we supply labour with water for drinking and other purposes. We exercise no control over contractors' working hours except where a Factory is involved. We give contractors' labour free medical attendance when injured. In many cases contractors' labour work on piece-work system. Their men rarely work during the intense heat of the day and sometimes work late at night by moonlight.

(iv) The effect of using contractors as intermediaries is that by such means we are able to get work done economically and quickly. The men employed by the contractors earn more money than our own men on similar work paid on a daily basis.

### III.—Housing.

16. (i) As at August 31st, 1929, housing was provided for 9,205 employees or 53% of the number employed.

(iii) No statistics are available but it is estimated that about 5,000 employees live in rented quarters.

(iv) No statistics are available but it is estimated that about 3,000 men live in quarters belonging to themselves or their relations.

17. There is little difficulty in obtaining land round the Oilfields for building purposes. Application is normally made through the Thugyis of village areas to the Deputy Commissioner.

18. (i) The workmen's likes and dislikes have been taken into account and as far as has been economically possible quarters have been built to the liking of the various classes they are intended to house.

(ii) All quarters are single storeyed buildings. The opinion of the Company's Medical Officers is obtained before quarters are built. All quarters are built with due regard to airiness, light and drainage.

(iii) Main roads and pathways are electrically lighted in all the large barrack areas at Khodaung : so soon as current and materials are available they will be installed at Chauk. At Khodaung clerical staff and senior artisans can obtain interior electric light on payment for current consumed and for fittings used, which fittings remain their property.

There are adequate latrines in all areas, and with the exception of two areas where the ground has been sufficiently level to allow automatic flush systems to be used, are of the bucket type.

Conservancy is under the Medical Officer. Dust bins are kept near all quarters for collecting refuse and the contents are removed and incinerated daily.

All roads, pathways and surroundings of quarters are swept daily by special sweepers.

Water is available from stand pipes for 24 hours a day.

Clerks and supervisors have separate bath rooms in the compounds of their quarters. Workmen are provided with an adequate number of cement wash places in all barrack areas.

19. There are no empty quarters.

20. All Company accommodation is supplied rent free to employees.

21. There is no subletting. The workmen of other employers do not occupy our quarters. There has been no trouble about discharged men leaving Company quarters.

22. It is our opinion that residence in Company quarters raises the standards of living of the clerk or workman accommodated. To obtain the prizes that are offered for the best-kept quarters and gardens men spend a lot of their spare time with their families pottering round their gardens instead of going to the villages and spending money in useless ways. Well-kept gardens beautify and reduce the cost of maintenance of the quarters provided, help to raise the standard of living, encourage general tidiness and provide a certain amount of cheap recreation.

#### IV.—Health.

23. (i) *General Health conditions of workers.*—The total deaths of employees from both natural causes and accidents was 84 between January 1st and August 31st 1929.

(ii) In the villages, all deaths and births are reported to the Thugyi, in the Municipality, to the ward headman. We record all births and deaths among the employees accommodated by the Company and the birth rate for the eight months, January 1st to August 31st, 1929, was 15 per 1,000 and infant mortality (under 2 years) 427 per 1,000 children born. For the purposes of calculating the birth rate and infant mortality rate we have taken only housing areas where married workmen living with their wives and families are housed. Areas allotted to Indian bachelors are not included.

(iii) (a) In the Oilfields the men generally work in the open, drilling well derricks are provided with shelter against sun and rain.

The Workshops are newly built and are light and well ventilated. The Factories comply with all the provisions of the Factories Act.

(iv) The staple foods are rice, dhal and vegetables.

Burmans eat a fair amount of fish and chickens, generally the Burman lives well. The Telugu in Burma eats flesh about once a week. The Ooriyah in Burma is usually a vegetarian. Mohamedans eat flesh, fish or chickens nearly every day.

(v) Not applicable to the Oilfields as a city. Little apparent effect. Although so many of the Indian workmen are either bachelors or living away from their wives the amount of venereal disease, treated, or known, is no larger among the Indian workers than among the bachelor Burman worker who is living with or near his own family.

(vi) Statistics are kept for the main Oilfields at Khodaung and Chauk and out of a payroll of 14,700 men between 1-1-29 and 31-8-29 there were 84 deaths. The mortality rate per thousand employed was therefore 5·7. In the same period out of 8,494 employees living in Company's quarters in these two Oilfields there were 13 deaths or a mortality rate of 1·5 per 1,000.

24. (i) The Company employs 4 whole-time European Medical Officers with a staff of 5 qualified Indian doctors and one Burman doctor, 10 compounders, 2 European nurses, 12 Asiatic nurses and 25 dressers. There are two hospitals with accommodation for 140 Asiatic patients. The main Hospital at Nyaungghla has recently been rebuilt and is entirely up-to-date. Major operations are regularly performed,—it has a complete and modern X-Ray installation and a Pathological Laboratory where the usual tests (including Wassermann) are a part of the regular routine. There are two hospitals for contagious diseases with accommodation for 85 Asiatic patients. In addition there are 7 Company dispensaries where treatment for injuries or minor cases is available day or night. Motor ambulances collect out-patients unable to walk to the dispensaries.

(ii) There is a Government hospital with 39 beds and an out-patient ward capable of handling 90 cases a day but few B. O. C. employees attend.

25. (i) Indians in general avail themselves of our medical facilities with great readiness although a few have some hesitation about becoming in-patients. Burmans use our medical facilities but many prefer to lose pay and take treatment from Burman Seh Sayas. A workman does not get pay whilst sick except on a medical chit signed by a qualified medical practitioner.

(ii) Occasionally by families of employees.

26. (a) (i) Latrines are provided in all Factories.

(ii) Water for drinking is available at work places.

(iii) There is a liberal supply of water laid on to all drilling wells, godowns and field offices and workmen bathe and wash from these taps.

(b) (i) Latrines are provided in all Company housing areas.

(ii) Water is supplied to all Company housing areas. The villages immediately round the Oilfields are supplied with water by the Company.

29. (i) No industrial disease.

(ii) Mild cholera epidemics occur at the end of the rainy season.

Cases in 1928 :

Cholera .. .. .	56	employees. In addition 21 non-employees were also treated.
Plague .. .. .	15	
Hookworm .. .. .	27	
Beri beri .. .. .	14	

There is no indigenous malaria. A few cases of imported malaria were treated during the year.

30. All workmen recommended for sick leave by the Medical Officer are paid up to 7 days full pay for each period of sickness, and all medical treatment is free. These terms have been in force since 1923. It is unlikely that any system of sickness insurance would confer on our workers greater benefits than they now enjoy. There would moreover be considerable difficulty in getting *all* Burman workers to accept Western medical treatment, hence we consider it unnecessary and undesirable to introduce a system of sickness insurance.

31. *Maternity Benefits.*—None. Less than 20 women workers are employed and as these leave they will be replaced by men.

## V.—Welfare.

32. (i) Provision of free schools.

Investigation of grievances.

Settlement of disputes between workmen.

Clubs/Institutes.

33. The Company employs European Labour Superintendents in each of the large Oilfields.

34. (a) (i) Food carriers are employed to carry food for shift workers from their home to the men at work. Brahmin cooks are employed to cook food for Indian gangs messing together.

(ii) The Labour Superintendent encourages the Indian unskilled labourer to take part in village sports such as fire dances, wrestling and similar games that the men usually play in their villages. There are recreation grounds and athletic sports for Burman workers and inter-school sports for B. O. C. school children are arranged. There are 18 football clubs among the Company's Asiatic employees. Two clubs, furnished with billiard tables and materials for other indoor games, together with tennis courts have been provided by the Company for employees of the clerical class.

(iii) Free electric lights are given to Pagodas, Mosques, Hindu and Sikh Temples. Motor lorries are lent for religious or other holiday processions. Practical assistance such as the provision of electric lights, water and transport is given to Indian workers in making arrangements to celebrate the big Pujas.

35. The difficulty of obtaining level ground in the vicinity of the Oilfields has hampered the work. Both Indians and Burmans are keen on watching games or athletics but the numbers wishing to take an active part are comparatively small.

36. (i) At present no facilities. A year or so ago an evening class to teach Burman drillers the names in English of the various tools and operations used in connection with drilling oil wells was started as an experiment. The attendance which had never been large, gradually dwindled away. The attendance was voluntary and as we doubted the wisdom of making it compulsory the experiment was not repeated. If there were a request from our men to provide educational facilities for them we should be prepared to give it favourable consideration.

(ii) We employ no workers on-half time.

(iii) The Company has built, fully equipped and staffed 15 vernacular Primary Schools and 4 Vernacular middle schools. These schools are recognised by Government and inspected by Government School Inspectors. The staff are all fully qualified Government certificated teachers. All education for employees' children is free. English is taught from the III Standard upwards.

(iv) There are 1,446 Burman and 257 Indian children attending Company schools. The average daily attendance is 75.86 % of those on the schools rolls.

37. The Company has a provident fund for this purpose. Men whose basic monthly wages total Rs. 30 or over are allowed to contribute upto one month's pay in one year. The Company contributes a sum equal to the workmen's contribution interest at 5 % per annum is paid on all balances.

38. The Labour Superintendent works in close touch with the workmen. In response to suggestions made to him about the high cost of living and the high rates charged in the bazaar to those compelled to buy on credit the Company started a rice store in 1924. The store gradually extended its activities to include kerosene oil, cooking oil, clothes, soap and condensed milk. The Company sells kerosene oil to the store at concession rate. At the end of the trading year the profits are shared out *pro rata* to the employees' purchases during the year. At the share out in January 1929 for the trading year ending the previous September the store shared out Rs. 103,852 to 11,041 men representing a dividend of 10%. The dividend for the previous year was 9%.

## VI.—Education.

40. (i) Besides the Company schools, there are several Government recognised Anglo-Vernacular and Vernacular Schools in the towns near the Oilfields, in addition elementary education is given to Buddhist children in the numerous Hpogyi Kyaungs.

(ii) There are no children employed by the B. O. C. in the factories in the Oilfields.

(iii) Apart from one or two private teachers there are no facilities.

42. Our experience is that education generally brings a higher standard of living but there are exceptions. Men with some education are found preferring to mess with and live amongst the class in which they were born rather than adopt the standards of the class in which their superior education qualifies them to work. The industrial efficiency of machinists, electricians and artisans generally is improved by education. The industrial efficiency of the unskilled labourer would only be affected to the extent that it would make him a candidate for promotion to some capacity where he will no longer be classed as unskilled.

## VII.—Safety.

43. We consider the existing Factory regulations adequate.

44. During 1928 the following accidents in factories were reported :—

45. Cause.	Fatal.		Permanent partial disability.		Temporary disability.
	Nil.		3		87
			Permanent partial disablement.		Temporary disablement.
Defects in plant or machinery	..	..	..	..	..
Burns ..	..	..	..	..	19
Dropping of tools	..	..	..	..	14
Injuries from chips of steel, etc.	..	..	..	1	14
Workmen's own carelessness	..	..	..	2	33
Carelessness of fellow workmen	..	..	..	..	7
Total ..			3		87

46. " Safety belts " to prevent falls are provided for men working on oil well derricks. Orders compelling drillers to wear them when working on the derrick have been issued and are generally obeyed. Men not wearing safety belts are liable to dismissal. Guards have been fitted to machinery on wells drilling by the rotary process. A list of " donts " for workmen printed in Burmese, are prominently displayed in all shops and factories. Warning notices in different vernaculars are posted outside electrical sub-stations.

Every accident is enquired into on the assumption that under different circumstances it might have been fatal and when possible orders are issued which should prevent recurrence.

47. From January 1st to August 31st, 1929—

<i>Death</i>	<i>Permanent partial disability.</i>	<i>Temporary disability.</i>
7	9	717

The figures under the heading "temporary disability" include all accidents even if the disability be for one day only.

48. First aid boxes are kept in godowns on the field. There are seven dispensaries with qualified Burman and Indian doctors in charge. Three Motor ambulances are available at all hours.

49. Heads of Company Departments are kept posted with regard to Rules and Regulations and are responsible for seeing that all subordinates permanently or temporarily in control of operations are cognisant of danger where such exists, of risks to avoid, and of current safety regulations. It is part of Labour Superintendent's routine welfare work to see that 'Safety First' principles are practised throughout the Company's operations.

50. There is nothing to show that accidents are in any way caused through fatigue or ill health. We have recently started to keep particulars of the hour at which each accident occurred and out of 823 accidents 707 happened in daylight and 116 during the dark hours. The percentage of men working after dark is 23 per cent. of the payroll. Working conditions affect the number of accidents considerably. The nature of the industry, which calls for men to control heavy tools and materials at a height with others working below them and the broken and difficult nature of the ground in the Oilfield areas are conditions which affect the number of accidents. The carelessness of the men, the familiarity which has bred contempt, is also a large factor.

### VIII.—Workmen's Compensation.

51. (i) The provisions of the Act have been extended to cover certain classes of the Company's employees, but the Company, both previous to the extension and since, has voluntarily applied the provisions of the Act to itself in all cases of men injured at work.

(ii) See reply to 51 (i). Every man injured at work claims and receives compensation as though the Workmen's Compensation Act covered his particular case.

(iii) No effects noticeable.

(iv) The Company covers its risks arising out of accidents to men at work by a system of internal insurance. Our work people appear to have no qualms about the financial ability of the Company to settle any claim for compensation arising out of an accident at work.

(v) Generally we consider that compulsory insurance by employers under this heading is desirable but recommend that allowance and provision be made to exclude those large business concerns that have taken, or will take, measures to cover their risks under the Workmen's Compensation Act by an arrangement of internal insurance.

52. Inasmuch as we voluntarily apply the provisions of the Act to all our employees our views are in favour of the extension.

*Possibility of providing against insolvency of employers so covered.*—By compulsory insurance subject to the exceptions stated in the answer to 51 (v).

53. *Suitability of provisions relating to—(i) Scales of compensation.*—Suitable.

(ii) *Conditions governing grant of compensation.*—Suitable.

(iv) *Machinery of administration.*—(a) Commissioners under the Act should be Government officials living in industrial areas. (b) Commissioners under the Act should be easily approachable so that in undisputed cases where the employer has deposited compensation there should be no necessity for the claimant to employ legal assistance. (c) There should be no delay in settlement of undisputed claims. (d) In cases of permanent partial disablement where the claimant has accepted the compensation offered there should be no suggestion that he is *compelled* to attend before the Commissioner and signify his approval before the Commissioner will register the memorandum of agreement. In cases where the Commissioner and the compensated workman live at some distance apart, the agreement should be registered without further extension of the usual period unless the workman has protested in person or by letter. (e) In cases of compensation for death where the workman has been killed in one province and his dependants live in another province and the names and addresses of the dead man and his dependants have been supplied by the employer there should be no delay (i) in transferring the money to the province in which the deceased man's dependants reside, (ii) payment made to the dependants.

(v) *Other matters.*—The scale of compensation as laid down appears generally suitable but certain anomalies arise. In a recent accident a man lost two thumbs; the scale of compensation for one thumb is 25 per cent. It is a moot point whether the disability caused by losing two thumbs is equal to the loss of a left arm below the elbow or a leg below the knee. Again it is

open as to whether the compensation should be 25 per cent. of the man's earning capacity plus 25 per cent. of 75 per cent. of the man's earning capacity, or 50 per cent. of his earning capacity. In the case quoted the man was compensated on a basis of 50 per cent. disability.

### IX.—Hours.

#### (a) Factories.

55. (i) Our normal working hours are regulated consistently with the Factory Act now in force and are not more than eight hours per day throughout with necessary intervals. Except in the cases of "exempted" factories the hours worked per week are 48 hours per day of 8 hours.

(ii) The average overtime worked by 2,081 men in factories totalled 3,143 days a month. Total hours worked per day including overtime 8.46 hours : per week 50.76 hours.

(iii) Spreadover is almost non-existent the number of workers held on call being negligible.

56. 6 days are worked per week save in the cases of "exempted" factories.

57. *Effect of 260 hours restriction.*—(i) and (ii) Does not affect us or our workmen as we work an 8 hours day.

59. *Possibility of reduction in maxima.*—We see no need for any reduction.

60. (i) (a) and (b) The intervals we give are in accordance with the Factory Act. In many cases they are more liberal and are such as to minimise fatigue of which we have had no complaints. They provide for meals in accordance with the workers convenience.

(ii) *Suitability of the law.*—Suitable.

(iii) *Suitability of the hours during which the factory is working.*—Suitable.

(iv) *Number of holidays given.*—Burman workers 10 days a year : Indian workers 8 days a year arranged appropriate to caste/religion. Pay is sanctioned for these holidays. Men working on a sanctioned holiday receive double pay.

61. (i) In all our Factories other than those "exempted" Sunday is observed as a day of rest. Days of rest in "exempted" Factories are regulated by the Factory Act with the approval of the Factory Inspector.

(ii) *Suitability of the Law.*—Suitable.

62. Exempting provisions and the use made of them relate to Oil-Water Pump stations on the Main Pipe Line, Oil Refineries, and Electric Power Stations.

#### • (D) (c) Other Industrial Establishments.

78. (i) Drillers and

Driller helpers	..	Shift	56 hours week	..	8 hours shift.
			Day workers 56 hours week	..	10 hours day. 6 hours Saturday.
Well Pullers	-	..	Shift	..	56 hours week .. 8 hours shift.
			Day workers 56 hours week	..	10 hours day. 6 hours Saturday.
Rigbuilders	..		56 hours week	..	10 hours day. 6 hours Saturday.
Other labour	..		46 hours week	..	8 hours day. 6 hours Saturday.

(ii) Shift workers, or 20 per cent. of the total employed do not work overtime. Day workers are seldom called upon to work overtime. Based on the first six months of 1929 the actual average time worked was 8.57 hours per day ; 49.42 hours per week. Overtime is only worked to enable important jobs to be finished or in connection with public safety.

(iii) There is no spreadover. Men are only on call during their work hours.

79. Some shift workers, about 15 per cent. of the total employees work 7 days a week, the remaining employees work six days a week.

80. We see no necessity for special regulations.

### X.—Special questions relating to women, young adults and children.

(A). *Factories.*—81—89. No children are employed in our Factories. Except for 6 women employed in a Saw-mill as saw dust carriers no women are employed.

At present we have no real facilities for the apprenticeship or training of young adults. We employ young men, teach them crafts but after they have learned a little they often feel or believe that they have learned sufficiently to earn a higher wage elsewhere, leave us and seek employment from others.

C. *Other Establishments.*—92. 7 women are employed in collecting oil from hand dug wells. 117 women and 36 children are employed to carry food to men at work but are not in any way employed in the industry. 94 boys are employed as messengers. Apart from the above, women and children are not employed. As women and children are generally unsuitable for Oilfields work we offer no opinion, on the need for regulations.

## XII.—Wages.

96. (i) We have no piece rates. For prevailing rates and average earnings see accompanying statement giving summary of occupation for the 4th quarter of 1928.

(ii) Agricultural labour Rs. 15 to Rs. 18 a month.

(iii) All earnings are paid in cash. Free housing is not considered in any way as part of a man's earnings, i.e., the rate of pay is the same whether the workmen be housed or not.

97. (i) There has been no general increase since 1923. There has never been a decrease in the standard rates of pay of our workpeople.

(ii) There has been no general variation since the last increase in 1923 when the increased rates were part of a strike settlement.

(iii) In pre-war days the number employed in the industry was about 30 per cent. of the present payroll. We have no figure of pre-war cost of living. There has been a decrease in the cost of living the past 2 years and wages have remained constant.

98. No money is sent to villages through the Company. The amount sent through the Post Office to villages in India by the Ooriyahs and Telugus is known to be large. It is estimated that the Ooriyah sends back 30 per cent. of his monthly earnings: the Telugu about 20 per cent.

99. No payments in kind are made.

101. (i) Wages were fixed by a negotiated agreement during the strike in May 1923 but the wages of certain classes were again increased spontaneously by the Company in November 1923.

(ii) Wages in certain departments were increased by the Company according to the increased responsibility that the Burmans showed they could hold.

102. Overtime and Sunday work is paid for as straight time based on an eight hour day.

103. The wages of 82 per cent. of the men employed are standardised.

104. There have always been large numbers of men attracted to the Oilfields by the wages obtainable there. Increased rates would make very little difference in the class or qualification of the men seeking employment. A decrease in rates would affect the supply of skilled men but the current rates of pay for unskilled workers are so much in excess of present day cost of living for these men, that a cut in unskilled rates would have to be very large before the supply of man would be materially affected.

105. We have applied a rough system of minimum wages to ourselves. The minimum wage paid to workmen is Rs. 26 for a 28 day month. Apprentices, durwans, sweepers, domestic servants, cooks for labour gangs, a total of a little less than 10 per cent. of our employees, are not classed as workmen.

Our view is that actual minimum rates for wages depend essentially upon economic factors such as the supply of workers available and the employers' ability to pay. In the relatively stable conditions now obtaining in the Oil Industry in Burma, such factors have resulted and seem likely to continue to result in wage minima satisfactory alike to employee and employer. We would deprecate legislation or any other means which aim at an arbitrary fixation of rates independent of the natural economic factors which must ultimately control them.

106. (i) *Extent of fining.*—Average monthly Rs. 1,002-9-0. Average monthly payroll Rs. 8,36,204-8-0.

(ii) *Other deductions.*—(a) Men who have joined the Provident Fund described under reply to 109 (i) agree to have one tenth of their pay deducted for ten months of the year. No deduction is made in December because of the hardship caused through the collection of the Thathameda tax and no deduction is made in April the month of the Burmese New Year festival.

(b) The yearly deduction from the December pay of the work people of Thathameda Tax.

(iii) Fines are kept in a separate account and used for charities, to repatriate sick workmen, to assist dependants of deceased workmen apart from those injured or killed at work, to assist sports meetings and provide prizes for the best-kept Asiatic gardens and quarters.

(iv) We see no necessity for legislation but consider that it should be recognised as desirable that fines be used entirely for objects of charity in aid of Asiatic employees and for the promotion of their welfare generally.

107. (i) *Periods for which wages paid.*—Monthly.

(ii) *Periods elapsing before payment.*—Normally pay out starts on the 12th of the month and is completed by the 17th. 80 per cent. of the men are paid out by the afternoon of the 14th.

(iii) *Desirability of legislation.*—(a) to regulate periods, (b) to prevent delay in payment. Undesirable.

(iv) Unclaimed wages are kept in a separate account. Such wages are paid even after lapses of many years whenever the proper claimant applies for them.

108. (i) We have little information but a very large number of Burman agriculturists borrow money at seed time and repay out of the proceeds of the harvest. A small percentage of our Burman employees from time to time assist their relatives in villages but whether this assistance is used for debt reduction or for general purposes is not known.

(ii) There is little indebtedness among our Indian workpeople. The Burman generally is limited in his expenses not by the pay he earns but rather by the amount of credit he can obtain. Statistics are not available.

109. (i) There are bonus schemes in certain departments whereby—

(a) A given time is allotted for a certain task. The bonus given is equal to the pay of the days saved, *i.e.*, if the time allotted be 30 days and the job is finished in 25 days, the bonus will be equal to 5 days pay. It is shared among the men participating *pro rata* and is normally paid at the pay day following the completion of the job.

(b) There is a Provident Fund to which all men whose monthly earnings total Rs. 30 may belong. The man subscribes up to one month's pay in one year, the company adds a similar amount. Interest at 5 per cent. per annum is paid on all balances.

(ii) The scheme outlined in the answer to 109 (i) (a) is based on work done.

110. (i) A monthly average of 90 men, or 0.5 per cent. of the payroll applied for and were granted an average of 20 days leave each in the first six months of 1929.

(ii) Leave with pay is granted to all Asiatics on agreements or on monthly rates of pay. Men on daily rates are granted leave without pay and are reinstated on their return. Extension of leave, on the representation of the workmen, is granted whenever possible.

(iii) There is no loss of back lying wages. All dues are paid before the man starts his leave.

### XIII.—Industrial efficiency of workers.

112. We have taken this to include Burmans. There has been an improvement in efficiency of Burman and Indian workers during the past 10 years.

113. Although no direct comparison can be made between Burman/Indian and foreign workers in this country, it may possibly be remarked that whereas two Americans only are required to drill a well in the U. S. A., a crew of 6 to 12 Burmans are required in Burma; again where three men form a production gang in America, 7 Burmans are required in this country.

114. Such comparison as is possible is affected mainly by education and character. Migration, machinery, physique, climate and standard of living affect the comparison little.

Normally the Burman with practical experience is unfit to be a supervisor by his limited education. It is difficult to find educated Burmans with sufficient patience and character to take up manual work for a long enough period to fit them for positions of supervision.

115. We have little opportunity of changing our working hours but in regard to night shift work it can be said definitely that the work produced through the night is not as good as that produced during the hours of day-light even with the adequate electric lighting and supervision that we have.

There are no statistics to show what advantage lies in expenditure on health and sanitation and although there is doubtless some measure of advantage it is not readily apparent inasmuch as 90 per cent. of the workmen are employed in the open air.

To a certain extent the same applies to housing except that improved housing invariably raises the standard of living, helps to keep work people contented and thereby has an effect on production.

In certain departments a bonus given for quicker results, closely akin to piece work, increased the amount of work done, allowed the men to earn more pay in less time and to a limited extent allowed supervision to be reduced. Our work people are little addicted to drink or drugs and for that reason we would prefer that licensed liquor or opium shops were not opened near the Oilfields.

There are few, if any, duties performed by our workmen capable of producing industrial fatigue such as can be imagined in Factories producing goods for sale on repetition work. Our work, even in our factories is varied, movement from place to place and changes of position are constant.

116. Generally the operations connected with oil winning depend on factors entirely beyond the workers' control.

Improved efficiency might be obtained by the adoption of piece work/bonus system where possible, and secondly in technical instruction in evening or other classes. In regard to the evening classes workers will never profit by facilities offered until they have developed more character than they now have. The failing of our workers lies in their incapability of sustained effort and inability to tackle things out of the ordinary.

#### XIV.—Trade Combinations.

117. (i) and (ii) There is no organization of employees. There was at one time a Labour Union (to the best of our belief un-registered) to which a small percentage of our Burman work people belonged but about the middle of 1926 this became moribund.

119. There are no Trade Unions in the Oilfields.

#### XV.—Industrial Disputes.

123 (i). There was a strike among the Oilfield workers in 1923. The main demands were for more pay, free housing or an allowance in lieu, free water supply to all villages, abolition of the bribery and corruption on the Oilfields necessary to obtain employment, and a reduction in Thathamada-tax. The strike did not affect the Indian employees; it followed closely upon the first elections to the Legislative Council and there is little doubt that there was intense Burman political feeling behind it.

There was a brief strike in 1926. The principal causes being the institution of an independent system of timekeeping, and the change over from monthly rates of pay to daily rates for manual workers, there was also a demand for an increase in pay and for a reduction in Thathamada-tax or at least that it should not be collected through the Oil Companies. There has been no strike since 1926.

(ii) The strike in 1923 started in March, a settlement was reached in May and part of the men returned but again went out, the strike ultimately fizzled out in July 1923. The strike in 1926 lasted from February 2nd to February 27th when the men returned to work unconditionally. Neither strike affected the Indians to any great extent. Both strikes are noteworthy for the violent intimidation carried on by a few extremists and the numerous cases of incendiarism.

(iii) The 1923 strike was settled by (a) an all round increase in rates of pay. (b) The establishment of a Labour Bureau to register men seeking employment, to select and engage workmen for all vacancies and to investigate complaints of unjust discharge, extortion or other grievances. (c) Water was supplied to villages surrounding the fields. It was not a condition of the settlement of the strike but more housing was built, as a free gesture. The 1926 strike fizzled out in three weeks and the men returned to work without a settlement.

(iv) In the 1926 strike the loss to industry cannot be estimated. Quite apart from the loss of production there were the cases of wells in the process of drilling and upon which lakhs of rupees had been spent which were being ruined. The loss to the workers was about Rs. 200,000 in wages not earned. No figures for the 1923 strikes are available.

124. (v) We have two workers councils, one representing all classes of Burman workmen and one representing the Indian workmen. These councils meet at regular intervals and make representations on behalf of their workers. In addition all workmen put grievances or requests through the Labour Bureaux where they have unrestricted entry at all times of the day.

DETAILED STATEMENT FOR 4TH QUARTER, 1928.

Statement referred to in reply to subject 96 (i).

Occupation.	Average No. of men employed.	Total Cost including overtime.	Men on				Average Cost per man per mensem.
			Monthly Rate.		Daily Rate.		
			Max.	Min.	Max.	Min.	
Armature Winders ..	13	Rs. 2,193 6 0	Rs. ..	Rs. ..	Rs. 4 6 10	Rs. 1 1 3	Rs. 56 3 0
Assistant Surgeons ..	4	5,475 0 0	500	250	..	..	456 4 0
Assistant Labour Superintendents ..	2	1,534 4 0	300	225	..	..	255 11 0
Assistant Telegraph Superintendents ..	1	825 0 0	275	275	..	..	275 0 0
Bazaar Superintendent ..	1	183 4 0	..	..	1 10 8	1 10 8	61 1 0
Blacksmiths and Helpers ..	314	36,112 4 0	..	..	13 5 4	1 2 6	38 5 0
Boat and Bargemen ..	18	1,531 8 0	..	..	1 0 0	0 13 10	28 5 0
Boiler House attendants ..	17	2,765 6 0	..	..	4 0 0	1 5 4	54 3 0
Boilermen ..	397	47,278 8 0	..	..	1 8 8	1 0 0	39 11 0
Burmese Nurses ..	9	4,789 0 0	150	100	..	..	177 5 0
Clerks ..	1,048	2,76,596 13 0	400	30	..	..	87 15 0
Carpenters ..	176	26,759 6 0	..	..	4 3 9	1 0 8	50 11 0
Cartmen ..	12	1,130 8 0	..	..	1 8 8	0 14 10	31 6 0
Chemists ..	3	1,613 4 0	180	120	..	..	179 4 0
Compounders ..	10	2,878 6 0	150	75	..	..	95 14 0
Cooks for coolies ..	157	8,566 4 0	..	..	1 0 0	0 5 4	18 13 0
Construction Supervisor ..	1	430 2 0	100	100	..	..	143 6 0
Domestic Servants ..	571	42,962 0 0	..	..	2 0 0	0 5 4	25 1 0
Durwans ..	1,084	77,348 4 0	..	..	1 13 4	0 5 4	23 13 0
Drillers Helpers ..	2,630	3,58,657 14 0	..	..	5 3 2	1 2 6	45 3 0
Engineers (Assistants) ..	59	35,500 11 0	450	100	..	..	200 9 0
Electricians ..	13	8,722 4 0	475	60	..	..	223 10 0
Equipment Inspectors ..	123	14,122 4 0	..	..	3 4 4	1 1 3	38 4 0
Firemaster ..	1	600 0 0	200	200	..	..	200 0 0
General Labour ..	6,310	5,78,359 14 0	..	..	2 11 1	1 0 8	30 10 0
Havildar ..	1	600 0 0	200	200	..	..	200 0 0
Driller (Burman) ..	1	603 0 0	201	201	..	..	201 0 0
Hospital Attendants ..	9	929 10 0	..	..	2 0 0	0 13 4	34 6 0
Launch Dock staff ..	42	7,910 14 0	..	..	15 0 0	0 14 2	62 12 0
Launch Engine room Staff ..	29	4,118 4 0	..	..	4 0 0	0 12 10	47 5 0
Linemen ..	58	6,766 6 0	..	..	2 8 0	1 1 3	38 14 0
Masons and Helpers ..	98	17,852 12 0	..	..	3 13 7	2 5 0	60 11 0
Mechanics and Helpers ..	1,533	2,04,714 3 0	..	..	11 8 8	1 1 3	44 8 0
Meter Readers ..	22	4,026 2 0	170	30	..	..	61 0 0
Motor Boat Crews ..	10	1,147 2 0	..	..	2 0 0	0 13 4	38 3 0
Motor Car Drivers ..	266	45,814 8 0	..	..	2 14 2	1 1 3	57 7 0
Moulders ..	54	7,787 2 0	..	..	4 3 9	1 2 6	48 1 0
Oilmen ..	1,130	1,06,377 0 0	..	..	1 5 4	1 0 7	31 6 0
Overseers ..	35	15,979 12 0	400	60	..	..	152 3 0
Paymaster ..	1	633 0 0	201	201	..	..	211 0 0
Painters ..	10	1,157 2 0	..	..	3 5 0	1 0 8	38 9 0
Pattern Makers ..	5	702 8 0	..	..	3 4 4	1 5 7	46 13 0
Raftmen ..	2	233 10 0	..	..	2 14 2	1 9 11	38 15 0
Rigbuilders ..	1,141	1,43,660 12 0	..	..	5 12 4	1 1 3	42 0 0
Rod Pullers ..	1,175	1,60,727 14 0	..	..	6 11 9	1 2 6	45 10 0
Sawyers ..	33	4,531 6 0	..	..	4 13 0	1 5 7	45 12 0
Sawmill Supervisor ..	1	450 0 0	140	140	..	..	150 0 0
Signallers and Phone Operators ..	124	29,831 0 0	200	40	..	..	80 3 0
Surveyors and Draughtsmen ..	29	8,272 10 0	250	20	..	..	95 1 0
Steel Work Erectors ..	4	1,003 14 0	..	..	4 9 11	1 14 10	83 10 0
Switchboard Attendants ..	19	2,391 4 0	..	..	5 0 0	1 0 0	41 15 0
Sub-Station Attendants ..	16	2,423 14 0	..	..	5 0 0	1 0 0	50 7 0
School Masters ..	31	5,080 12 0	140	30	..	..	54 6 0
Telegraph Inspectors ..	3	1,299 8 0	190	90	..	..	144 6 0
Tinmiths ..	11	1,513 10 0	..	..	2 5 0	1 2 6	45 13 0
Transport Assistants ..	8	6,772 10 0	350	225	..	..	282 3 0
Technical Assistants ..	1	1,211 8 0	201	201	..	..	403 13 0
Welders ..	54	8,856 8 0	..	..	5 12 4	1 2 6	54 11 0
Wiremen and Helpers ..	150	19,486 4 0	..	..	7 11 1	1 1 3	43 5 0
Watchmen ..	42	4,083 0 0	..	..	2 11 1	1 1 3	32 6 0
<b>Total ..</b>	<b>19,122</b>	<b>2,364,864 11 0</b>	<b>..</b>	<b>..</b>	<b>..</b>	<b>..</b>	<b>..</b>

## MEMORANDUM DEALING WITH LABOUR CONDITIONS AT BADARPUR, ASSAM.

## I.—Recruitment.

1. *Origin of Labour*.—Skilled labour only imported—all unskilled locally engaged.
2. *Contact with villages*—
  - (i) *Extent and frequency of return*.—No shortage of labour except at periods of sowing and harvesting crops.
  - (ii) *Extent of permanent labour force*.—800.
3. *Methods of recruitment*.—No recruiting necessary.
7. *Unemployment*—
  - (i) *Extent and character*.—Very little privation or involuntary unemployment but labour generally lazy and do no more work than necessary.
8. *Labour "turnover"*—
  - (i) *Average duration of employment*.—Two-three years.
  - (ii) *Extent of casual employment*.—About 5 per cent.
  - (iii) *Absenteeism*—
    - (a) *Extent, character and causes*.—Fairly general owing to private interests, intending crops, etc.
    - (b) *Seasonal or otherwise*.—Both.
    - (c) *Time and wages lost*.—About 15 per cent. of possible earnings.

## II.—Staff Organisation.

14. *Timekeeping, piece-work, contract and attendance registers*.—Based on system at Burma Fields.
15. *Contractors as intermediaries*.—For all major constructional work.

## III.—Housing.

16. *Extent to which housing is provided*—
  - (i) *By employers*.—For 10 per cent. of labour employed only. Remainder own their own houses and paddy land.
18. *Nature of accommodation provided in each class*—
  - (i) *In relation to workers' demands*.—Superior to own standard.
  - (ii) *In relation to best type from health point of view*.—Might be of better quality but sanitary and weather-proof.
20. *Rent rates in various classes*.—Free.

## IV.—Health.

23. *General health conditions of workers*—Good.
  - (i) *Figures of mortality*.—In past 3 years .002, .002 and .004 per cent. respectively.
24. *Extent of medical facilities provided*—
  - (i) *By employers*.—Well equipped hospital, 6 beds and free qualified native medical attention.
  - (ii) *By Government*.—Nil.
  - (iii) *By other agencies*.—Nil.
25. *Extent to which medical facilities are utilised*.—
  - (i) *Generally*.—By approximately 90 per cent. of workers.
29. *Disease*.—
  - (ii) *Prevalence of cholera, malaria, hookworm and other tropical diseases*.—Not excessive. Total cases treated for various ailments approximately 8,000 per annum.
31. *Maternity benefits*.—Nil.

## V.—Welfare.

32. *Extent of welfare work*—
  - (i) *By employers*.—No special welfare measures taken in respect of general labour. Means of recreative exercise, e.g., tennis, football provided for clerical and junior staff.
  - (ii) *By other agencies*.—Nil.

36. *Provision of educational facilities by employers.*—Nil.

37. *Desirability and possibility of provision for old age and permanent retirement.*—

Membership of Company's Provident Fund open to all employees drawing Rs. 30 per mensem and over.

#### VI.—Education.

40. *Facilities for children of employees.*—Two secondary and one primary school within radius of 5 miles.

#### VIII.—Workmen's Compensation.

81. *Workmen's Compensation Act*—

(i) *Extent of use.*—Generally applied.

#### IX.—Hours.

*Other Establishments*—

78. *Hours worked per week and per day.*—See Statement "A" attached.

#### XII.—Wages.

96. *Prevailing rates (time and piece) and average earnings.*—See Statement "B" attached.

107. *Periods of wage payment (day, week or month).*—Monthly.

#### XIII.—Industrial Efficiency of workers.

113. *Comparative efficiency of Indian and foreign workers.*—General efficiency of Indian labour much below average of Punjabis, Burmese, etc.

114. *Extent to which comparisons are affected by*—

(i) *Migration of workers.*—Slightly.

(v) *Physique.*—Considerably.

(vi) *Health.*—Slightly.

(viii) *Standards of living*—To some extent.

*General character.*—Mainly.

#### XV.—Industrial Disputes.

123. *Extents of strikes and lock-outs.*—Unknown to date.

#### STATEMENT "A".

78. *Hours worked per week and per day*—

Class of Labour.	Hours worked per day Normal.	Hours worked per day Actual.	Hours worked per week.	
			Normal.	Actual.
(a) Machine Shop Labour and Telephone men ..	8	8.01	48	48.08
(b) Topping Plant men and Boilermen .. ..	8	8.54	56	59.78
(c) Engineering Department, Labour, Fields Coolies, Rodpullers and Rig-builders .. ..	9	9.48	52	56.88
(d) Drilling Coolies .. ..	10	10.01	56	60.08
(e) Tindals and Oilmen .. ..	12	12.31	84	86.17

79. *Days worked per week*—

(b) and (e) 7 days.

(a), (c) and (d) 6 days.

## STATEMENT " B. "

Occupation.	Rates of wages per mensem.		Average earning per mensem.	Average earning per day.
	Maximum.	Minimum.		
	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.
Surveyors .. .. .	210 0 0	125 0 0	158 4 0	..
Draftsmen .. .. .	150 0 0	110 0 0	135 5 0	..
Welders .. .. .	150 0 0	130 0 0	155 8 0	..
Carpenters .. .. .	26 0 0	14 0 0	18 10 0	..
Maistries .. .. .	30 0 0	20 0 0	25 3 0	..
Dressers .. .. .	40 0 0	35 0 0	36 3 0	..
Chowkidar, Office boys, etc. ..	20 0 0	8 0 0	13 9 0	..
Keepers .. .. .	40 0 0	10 0 0	19 13 0	..
Enginebuilders .. .. .	23 0 0	14 0 0	15 7 0	..
Drilling Coolies .. .. .	40 0 0	14 0 0	19 9 0	..
Firemen and Helpers .. .. .	28 0 0	12 0 0	22 15 0	..
Oilmen .. .. .	18 0 0	14 0 0	17 7 0	..
Blacksmith and Helpers .. .. .	1 2 0	0 9 0	..	0 14 0
.. .. .	per day.	per day.	..	..
.. .. .	36 0 0	14 0 0	22 0 0	..
.. .. .	190 0 0	12 0 0	56 3 0	..
.. .. .	55 0 0	22 0 0	37 5 0	..
.. .. .	20 0 0	14 0 0	14 15 0	..
.. .. .	65 0 0	14 0 0	36 4 0	..
.. .. .	15 0 0	14 0 0	16 2 0	..
.. .. .	18 0 0	14 0 0	16 2 0	..
.. .. .	85 0 0	14 0 0	30 12 0	..
.. .. .	4 1 0	3 4 0	..	4 0 0
.. .. .	per day.	per day.	..	..
.. .. .	3 11 0	..	..	3 14 0
.. .. .	per day.	..	..	..
.. .. .	150 0 0	10 0 0	32 14 0	..
.. .. .	150 0 0	10 0 0	30 8 0	..
.. .. .	65 0 0	34 0 0	43 0 0	..
.. .. .	45 0 0	..	51 4 0	..
.. .. .	250 0 0	..	250 0 0	..
.. .. .	55 0 0	14 0 0	22 15 0	..

## MEMORANDUM DEALING WITH THE SYRIAM REFINERY.

## I.—Recruitment.

## 1. (i) Chiefly from India, viz.—

Anglo Indians .. .. .	125
Burmese .. .. .	673
Hindustanis .. .. .	1,440
Chittagonians .. .. .	1,092
Telegus or Coringhis .. .. .	2,486
Oorahs .. .. .	1,331
Bengalis .. .. .	68
Chinese .. .. .	75
Punjabis .. .. .	152
Madrasis .. .. .	44

Total .. 7,500

2. (i) Majority of Indian workers return to their native villages on an average every third year for at least 3 months.

(ii) Extent of permanent labour force.—7,500.

3. (i) Applicants for employment register their names with us. Applicants are medically examined and those passed fit are engaged as necessary.

(ii) Existing arrangement appears to be satisfactory.

(iii) *Public employment agencies.*—In view of specialised nature of our requirements this is considered neither necessary nor practicable.

4. The majority of our workmen have their families in India.

7. (i) We have usually from 100 to 150 men applying for situations. At the end of each month the number is greater due to the fact that men leaving to go to their country usually do so at the end of the month. They are paid off on the 1st of the following month. The numbers applying for employment in recent years at Syriam do not indicate any serious problem of unemployment in Burma.

(ii) *Extent to which caused by—(a) Retrenchment or dismissals.* None due to these causes. During reconstruction of the Refinery those thrown out of employment were given a bonus equivalent to one month's pay so that they could settle their affairs. They were then repatriated.

8. (i) *Average duration of employment.*—We estimate the average for general labour at 3 years.

(ii) *Extent of casual employment.*—Unless for approx. 100 men engaged in loading and unloading steamers, etc., we have no casual labour.

(iii) *Absenteeism (a) to (c)*—

		Average monthly days lost.	Cost. Rs.	hed.
Excluding Staff, Launch and Cargo Boat crews	Reason unknown	3,968	4,702	Wages lost.
	Sickness (Certified) .. ..	474	622	Wages lost.
	Accidents (Certified) .. ..	438	587	Wages paid.
Total .. ..		4,880	5,911	

Approx. Average daily Absentees= 180 men out of 6,300 workers.

## II.—Staff Organisation.

12. (i) Superior Staff are engaged in U. K.

Subordinate Staff are engaged locally.

(ii) Apprentices are trained in Chemical Laboratory and Engineering Workshops and in Works generally. (See 86).

13. *Relations between staff and rank and file.*—(i) Satisfactory.

(ii) *Value and defects of system of employing jobbers.*—No jobbers.

14. (i) Time is recorded by a special department under European supervision. Men on entering Works are handed a metal disc bearing their Works Number. They are obliged to hang this on a board at the department where they are employed; each operation is separately recorded. The two statements must agree before the time is recorded in the final Time Sheet.

(ii) Wages are made up and paid by a special department under European supervision. This department is entirely separate from that concerned with recording time. Pay vouchers are distributed to workers on pay day through Department heads. These show Name, Number, Time, Rate, Deductions and Amount payable. On presentation of the voucher at pay gate, workers are handed a sealed cover containing the amount payable. Payment is made under close European supervision.

15. (i) Repairs to wooden cargo boats, the making of roads, and erection of new buildings and tanks, are carried out by contractors under our supervision.

(ii) *Extent of sub-contracting.* We have no particulars in this connection.

(iii) Control exercised over working conditions. The control exercised is almost wholly in connection with the prevention of accidents and to ensure that all the employees of a contractor are over 15 years of age. No control is exercised regarding the number of hours worked by or the wages paid to Contractor's employees.

## III.—Housing.

16. (i) The Company has built 54 barracks which accommodate approximately 2,200 men of all castes. In addition, married quarters are provided for a limited number of the senior employees.

Control of housing is exercised by the Labour Welfare Superintendent assisted by a number of Headmen (employees) who are appointed by Government on Works Manager's recommenda-

tion. Each Headman is deputed to look after one hundred men. In order to enhance his status the Company pays each Headman Rs. 5 per mensem and grants full pay while on leave.

(iii) Those who cannot be accommodated in the Company's barracks rent quarters in Syriam village.

(iv) Burmese employees generally and a large number of Hindustanis own their own houses.

17. There is no difficulty in obtaining land in Syriam for building purposes. Application is made to the Deputy Commissioner, Hanthawaddy. Houses built within Municipal limits must conform to the relative bye laws and be approved by the Municipality.

18. (i) Special attention has been given to the requirements of the various castes accommodated.

(ii) The barracks are single storey brick buildings with cement floors and cement asbestos corrugated roofs. The roof sheets have been carried out to form a verandah along each side, these also have cement floors. All corners have been rounded off and the arrangement, generally, facilitates cleansing.

(iii) All roadways, barracks, kitchens, latrines, and bathing platforms are lit by electricity. Septic tank latrines are installed throughout with a constant supply of fresh water. Covered dust bins are kept near each barrack for collecting refuse and these are emptied twice daily.

Artesian well water is laid throughout the lines and numerous water taps are placed between the barracks and kitchens for the free use of occupants. The water supply is continuous.

19. The barracks are fully occupied.

20. All Company accommodation is supplied rent free to employees.

#### IV.—Health.

23. (i) Separate figures of mortality for B. O. C. employees not obtainable, as statistical figures are made out only for the Syriam Municipality.

The total population for Syriam is approximately 16,000 and in the year 1928 there were 356 deaths registered, giving a death rate of 23.43 per 1000.

(ii) A separate figure for B. O. C. employees is not obtainable for reasons stated above.

In the year 1928 the total number of births reported in Syriam was 322, giving a birth rate of 21.26 per 1000.

Infant Mortality rate—208 per thousand.

(iii) Working conditions.—(a) Very favourable, as all sheds and work places are open with ample ventilation and complete absence of any overcrowding.

(b) No Company's work is done by employees at home.

(iv) Dietary.—In Syriam village where the majority of the coolies obtain their food on contract at the lowest possible price the standard is low. In the Company's barracks the standard is good because (1) cooks are provided by the Company for each 50 men and (2) the occupants have no rent, etc., to pay.

(v) General development and bodily condition of majority is of quite high standard as all coolies are medically examined before being engaged.

(vi) Not applicable as a city, but with general labour separated to a very large extent from family life, venereal disease is extremely prevalent.

(vii) Deaths from	Disease	..	..	..	..	..	..	7
	Accidents	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
								9

These figures represent total deaths during the year 1928 amongst Burmah Oil Company's employees who either died of accident or as in-patients of the Syriam hospital. All serious cases from Cooly lines are admitted to Hospital but this is not possible in the village where deaths occur which are not traceable in our records.

24. (i) One European and two Indian Medical Officers with a Company Dispensary available day and night for minor ailments.

(ii) and (iii) A sufficient number of beds are always available in the Syriam Municipal Hospital which is maintained by—

(a) Government	..	..	..	..	..	..	8.0	%
(b) Municipality	..	..	..	..	..	..	40.0	%
(c) B. O. C.	..	..	..	..	..	..	33.0	%
(d) District Council	..	..	..	..	..	..	19.0	%
							100.0	%

25. (i) All sick obtain treatment free.—

Daily average attendance at Dispensary .. .. .	50
Daily average number granted leave as unable to work .. .. .	7
Daily average admission to Hospital .. .. .	1

26. (i) (a) and (b) Ample latrine accommodation is provided for all workers and clean tap water supplied from artesian wells. [(b) Refers to workers housed by the Company.]

(ii) (a) and (b) Piped water from artesian wells continuously available, both in Company's Lines and in village.

(iii) (b) Adequate bathing platforms are provided for each community at barracks. Water supply is continuous.

27. The Director of Public Health calls on request.

28. (i) *Control on temperature in factories.*—Regulations are suitable and are observed.

29. (i) There are no diseases strictly attributable to the work at the Refinery.

A number of cases of Traumatic Ophthalmia, caused by exposure to rays from electric welding are treated but are mostly due to neglect of precautions provided for its prevention. No cases of permanent disability have been seen from it. Actual handling of products, such as Wax, has been reduced to the absolute minimum; and no cases of Epithelioma have been reported during the last six years.

(ii) <i>Cholera.</i> —June 1926 .. .. .	3 weeks.
Attacks B. O. C. 50 others .. .. .	13
Deaths B. O. C. 30 others .. .. .	11
Cases mortality amongst B. O. C. .. .. .	60 %
Cases mortality amongst others .. .. .	84 %

*Malaria.*—A number of cases treated yearly, practically all being during the month of June following the break of the rains. These cases have almost invariably a history of previous fevers and have enlarged spleens showing a previous infection. Syriam may be regarded as a non-malarious station. Cases treated in 1928—16.

*Hookworm.*—Until recently this disease was considered to be present in approximately 70/80 per cent. of Coolies. A Hospital census in 1925 of all Coolies admitted to Hospital demonstrated its presence in 60 per cent. on one simple microscopical examination only. Cases of advanced anaemia from this cause were then common, but are now rarely seen. All proved cases were treated at Dispensary or Hospital. Attempts at mass treatment in 1924 and 1925 were discontinued owing to general opposition. The erection of coolie lines with proper road and paths and with good drainage of surroundings are the most efficacious method of prevention of this disease.

*Beri-Beri.*—17 cases treated in 1928.

*Dysentery.*—Both types of Dysentery not uncommon. 54 cases were treated in 1928.

## V.—Welfare.

33. The Company employs a special labour Welfare Superintendent whose duties include supervision of housing and investigation of all complaints in connection therewith or in connection with their employment.

34. (ii) (a) There is a Football Ground provided by the Company which is looked after by the Syriam Athletic Association and men are at liberty to use this on applying to the Association. Football matches are arranged by the Syriam Athletic Association on the League principle and at the end of the season medals are presented to the winners and the runners up.

(b) A Free Library has just been started in the Town of Syriam for the use of all nationalities. This has been got up by subscriptions and the Burmah Oil Company's Labour Welfare Superintendent is President of the Committee.

(iii) (a) The B. O. C. Employees' Urban Co-operative Credit Society, Ltd., was started in the month of May in the year 1921.

The membership to-day is 1,351 with a capital of Rs. 1,90,823-7-0.

The Works Manager of the Burmah Oil Company, Ltd., by virtue of his office, is President of the Society and an Honorary member of it. He may delegate his duties to an assisting officer of the Company who exercises a general control over its affairs.

The objects of the Society are :—

(a) To encourage thrift by affording a means of saving a portion of income on which a fair return may be reckoned, in the way of interest.

(b) To prevent hopeless indebtedness by enabling members to obtain advances on reasonable terms. Prior to the organisation of the B. O. C. Employees' Urban Co-operative Credit Society there were different classes of money lenders in Syriam, including three Chettiar firms and a Pawn Shop, who were simply preying on the less thrifty employees.

Many of these were indebted to money lenders for years and to avoid jail had been transferring their debts from one money lender to another, the principal being increased with each transaction, until their position became hopeless. The Burman, Anglo-Indian and Madrassi clerks are particularly prone to extravagance. Though the aims and objects of the Co-operative Credit Society, namely, promotion of thrift and self-help are not achieved, many of these clerks have paid off their debts altogether and are now beginning to possess dwelling houses of their own. Generally, their condition is decidedly improved. Before the Society was instituted none of the members possessed decent houses in Syriam. At the present time some members possess houses, valued at Rs. 1,000 to Rs. 7,000. A good number possess houses of lesser value and are proud of their ownership.

(b) Report of B. O. C. Workmen's Hospital Aid Fund Committee, Syriam. The B. O. C. Workmen's Hospital Aid Fund, Syriam, was started in the year 1918 and a Committee was formed then under the direction of Works Manager.

The Committee consists of eight members representing the following communities :—  
Burmese, Chinese, Bengali, Hindu, Punjabi, Chittagonian, Coringhi and Ooria.

The Clerks, Foremen, etc., subscribe towards the Fund monthly 2 annas each and the Workmen 1 anna each. The object of this Fund is to provide comforts and certain special equipment for the Syriam Hospital. Among other things, the Syriam Hospital has been provided with the following :—

- (1) Two kitchens at a cost of Rs. 3,600.
- (2) A set of Electrical Medical Apparatus at a cost of Rs. 4,000.
- (3) One operation table of up-to-date pattern at a cost of Rs. 2,500.
- (4) X-Ray Apparatus at a cost of Rs. 17,000. The amount of money already contributed by the Fund to the above purposes is Rs. 44,849-9-6 and cash in hand destined for the same purposes is Rs. 21,518-2-0.

36. The Company does not provide schools but assists financially in the building and maintenance of such by other organisations. (See also 40.)

37. Recognising the desirability of providing for retirement the Company has since the year 1929 provided a Provident Fund for the workers.

Members of the Fund may contribute each year a sum equivalent to one month's pay. The Company contributes an equal amount at the end of the year. Interest has been allowed at 5 % per annum. Members are not permitted to withdraw their capital from the Fund unless for sound investments in, say, House-building for their personal use.

## VI.—Education.

40. (i) Full education facilities exist. The following are the more important schools :—

- (1) Syriam High School. Accommodation for 390 pupils. Scope—Kindergarten to High School Final, A. V. Code.
- (2) St. George's English School. Accommodation for 200 pupils. Scope—Kindergarten to 7th Standard, English Code.
- (3) Ko Tun Hla's Vernacular Burmese School. 170 pupils. Infant to 7th Standard.
- (4) Indian A. V. School. Day and Night. 70 pupils. Infant to 4th Standard.

The above (excepting No. 3) are considerably subsidised by this Company.

41. *Facilities for industrial and vocational training.*—(See Clause 86).

42. We find no noticeable effect on standard of living. In regard to industrial efficiency the effect is noticeable only in the case of foremen, etc., who must, of necessity, be educated. Previously the type of man obtainable was one who had a certain amount of schooling and who had been trained as regards Engineering in a Workshop. Some of these men due to their natural ability were good in many respects but owing to their want of a better education initially, they tend to fall behind in these days of up-to-date and scientifically designed plant and machinery.

Since the reorganisation of the Government Technical Institute, Insein, a much better type of man is being turned out ; one, who in addition to having a good workshop training, is also well grounded in the theoretical side of Engineering.

## VII.—Safety.

44. Accidents for the year 1928—Serious (1 death) .. .. .	38
Minor .. .. .	390
	Total .. 428
	(12 months)
	Days lost .. 5,261
	Wages paid Rs. .. 7,046

45. Chiefly injuries to hands and feet caused through carelessness in handling material and lack of foot-wear. Injuries caused by machinery are few.

46. Every possible endeavour is made to prevent accidents and to induce the employees to use their intelligence towards this end. The latter is a difficult matter as may be instanced in connection with a recent accident in the Refinery. Here a Chinaman was instructed to cut off the branch of a tree. He—and he is one of a class of persons usually counted intelligent,—placed a ladder against the branch, stood on the ladder and sawed off the branch inside the point of support for the ladder. The result was branch, ladder and Chinaman all fell to the ground and the latter was severely injured.

48. First aid and medical relief always available at the Company's Dispensary in the Refinery.

49. (c) The relative Government departments keep in very close touch with operations and plans of all extensions/alterations are submitted for approval.

50. There is no doubt that safety to a great extent depends on the four conditions mentioned above ; the conditions under which our employees work are such that we have had no accidents attributable to them.

### IX.—Hours.

55. *Factories.*—(i) Tradesmen and labourers, per week 46 hours, per day 8 hours in 4 hour spells with interval of 2 hours. Saturday 6 hours with brief interval for rest.

Process workers on shift, per week 56 hours, per day 8 hours.

(ii) Actual, i.e., including overtime. Varies considerably but never exceeds maximum allowed by Factory Act unless with approval of Government Factory Inspector.

(iii) Workers are only on call during their actual working hours.

56. *Days worked per week.*—6 days except for Process workers on shift.

59. Reduction of Maxima may lead to reduction of wages. Not advisable in the financial interests of the workers. We pay daily rates for an 8 hours day and not for the 10 hours maximum permitted.

60. *Intervals.*—(i) (a) In relation to fatigue.—Half an hour's rest on heavy work as necessary.

(b) In relation to worker's meal times.—2 hours; 10-30 A.M. till 12-30 P.M.

(ii) Suitability of the law.—Suitable.

(iii) Suitability of hours during which factory is working.—Suitable.

(iv) General holidays to Labour average 6 days annually. For three of those days pay is sanctioned. The sanctioned holidays are the Festival days of the respective Castes. In the event of a worker being required to work on any of these Festival days he is given double pay for the day.

61. (i) Except in exempted departments under the Act Sunday is observed as a day of rest. In exempted departments days of rest are regulated by the Factory Act with the approval of the Chief Inspector of Factories.

(ii) Suitability of the law.—Suitable.

62. We take advantage of Special Exemptions under Miscellaneous Department. Notification No. 36, dated 18th June 1923, regarding Factories having work necessitating Continuous Production.

Also exemptions granted by Factory Inspector as follows :—

Hours of employment and weekly holiday ..	Certain Maistries and Tindals holding posts of supervision exempted.
Method of Changing Shift .. ..	Complete holiday of 24 hours not possible under Works method of changing shift. Present method approved by Factory Inspector.
Register in Form F .. ..	This register not required as Works Time and Pay Sheets give necessary information and are open to inspection by Inspector of Factories.
Hours of employment .. ..	Supplementary operations requiring irregular shifts, exemption from tabulation in Notices.
Exemption for persons holding positions of supervision.	

### X.—Special questions relating to women, Young Adults and Children.

81. *Factories*.—We have ceased to employ children.  
 83. *Suitability of regulations for women's work*—Suitable.  
 86. Ample facilities are given for training of fitters. Facilities are also given for the training of engineer apprentices. These may be divided as follows :—  
 (a) Tradesmen.  
 (b) Engineers.  
 (c) Students from Government Technical Institute, Insein.

Classes (a) and (b) are full time apprentices while the latter are part time in conjunction with the Government Technical Institute, Insein.

Apprentices in Classes (a) and (b) start their training under equal conditions and the latter are promoted from Class (a) when they pass an examination in English, Arithmetic, Mathematics and General Knowledge. This examination is held bi-yearly and is conducted by the Chief Draughtsman as a rule.

Those in class (a) are trained in one department only, being trained as turners, fitters or any particular trade they wish. On completion of their training most of them are retained in the Company's service. Those in class (b) are given a more general training to fit them to take up the duties of an Assistant Engineer either with the Company or elsewhere. They are encouraged to attend training classes in Technical Subjects in Rangoon. The Company arrange for their transport from Syriam to Rangoon and back again. The general training of the students in class (c) is under the control of the Principal, Government Technical Institute, Insein. This training is on the "Sandwich" system, and is of 5 years duration. In the first four years one term each year is spent in the Institute and the other in practical training here. Each term lasts about 5 months. The whole of the fifth and final year is spent here. In the case of particularly promising students the last year may be spent in taking an advanced course at the Institute or this course may be taken later on if the student so desires.

### XI.—Special questions relating to seamen and workers in Inland Navigation.

93. Launch crews are on duty for 12 hours during which time they have intervals for meals and rest.  
 Cargo boat crews have no set hours.  
 94. Neither launch nor cargo boat crews are provided with rations. Launch crews find their own accommodation ashore but cargo boat crews live on board their boats.

### XII.—Wages.

96. See accompanying statement giving Summary of Occupations, etc., for the 4th Quarter 1929.

97. *Movements in recent years*.—(i) Increases and decreases.

% increase from 1919 to 1929.

Rs. 20 and under	in 1919	increased by	Rs. 30	do.	Rs. 40	do.	Rs. 50	do.	Rs. 60	do.	Rs. 70	do.	Rs. 80	do.	Rs. 100	do.	%
do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	70/87%
do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	57/70%
do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	50/57%
do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	47/49%
do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	46/47%
do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	45%
do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	42%
do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	40%

- (ii) Reasons for variation. Increased cost of living.

Increases fixed by Arbitration award following on strike in 1921.

98. *Amount sent to villages*.—Information not available as all remittances are sent by individuals through local Post Office.

99. *Payment in kind and allied problem*.—No payment in kind.

102. *Basis of payment for overtime and Sunday work*.—Shift workers and workmen engaged on urgent repairs (necessitating the application for exemption from the rule regarding maximum number of hours per day) receive time and quarter for overtime. Ordinary overtime is paid for at rate shown in accompanying list. Sundays are paid for at ordinary daily rate.

105. *Minimum wages*.—See statement (reference 96 and 103).

No necessity for statutory establishment.

106. (i) *Extent of fining*.—Average monthly Rs. 408.

Average Monthly Pay Roll Rs. 2,85,241.

(ii) *Other deductions.*—(a) Workmen subscribe 1 anna per month and clerks, Foremen, etc., annas 2 per month to Workmen's Hospital Aid Fund [see 34 (iii) b].

(b) Members of Co-operative Credit Society have subscriptions, etc., deducted—[see 34 (iii) a].

(c) Sub Prov. Fund contributions deducted from members. (see 37 for extent).

(iii) *Utilisation of fines.*—Fines on account of direct loss to Company are retained, average monthly Rs. 123.

Fines for offences not causing direct loss to Company are handed to Syriam Hospital, average monthly Rs. 345.

107. (i) *Periods for which wages paid.*—The rate is per day of 8 hours. Payment is made monthly.

(ii) *Periods elapsing before payment.*—9 days approximately.

(iv) Unclaimed wages are retained until claimed. Ultimately they are given to charity.

110. *Annual or other leave.*—(i) (ii) For general labour 3 months without pay after 3 years or 6 months after 5 years service with lien on appointment. Generally taken advantage of.

(iii) Extent of consequential loss to worker of backlying wages. None. Those going on leave are paid in full up to date of departure from works.

111. *Desirability of Fair Wages Clause in public contracts.*—Considered desirable.

#### XV.—Industrial Disputes.

123 to 126. No industrial disputes at Syriam within the last 7 years.

#### XVII.—Administration.

138. *Acquaintance of work people with factory Legislation.*—Usual Factory Act Notices are posted at Main Entrance.

The Workmen's Compensation Act appears to be the only Act with which the workers are acquainted.

SYRIAN REFINERY.

Summary of occupation for the quarter ending 31st December 1928.

Reference: Subject XII—Wages (96) and (102).

Occupation.	Average No. of men employed.	Total Labour Cost including Overtime.		Labour Cost including Overtime.		Cost of Overtime.		Men on				Average cost per man per mensem.	
								Monthly Rate.		Daily Rate.			
		Rs.	A. P.	Rs.	A. P.	Rs.	A. P.	Max.	Min.	Max.	Min.	Rs.	A. P.
Apprentices (all kinds) .. ..	100	8,204	8 0	8,041	7 0	163	1 0	60 0 0	50 0 0	1 8 0	0 8 0	26	13 0
Blacksmiths .. ..	18	3,270	15 0	3,210	13 0	60	2 0	..	..	3 6 0	1 12 0	59	7 0
Bricklayers .. ..	80	12,618	14 0	11,872	12 0	746	2 0	..	..	2 5 0	2 0 0	49	8 0
Carpenters .. ..	60	11,140	3 0	11,090	5 0	49	14 0	..	..	3 1 0	1 12 0	61	10 0
Cartoon Makers .. ..	31	2,382	6 0	2,382	6 0	..	..	PW	PW	..	..	25	10 0
Casters .. ..	2	227	10 0	204	12 0	22	14 0	..	..	1 5 0	1 5 0	34	2 0
Case Makers .. ..	4	248	0 0	248	6 0	..	..	PW	PW	..	..	20	11 0
Chick Makers .. ..	6	543	13 0	543	13 0	..	..	..	..	1 5 0	1 4 0	30	3 0
Clerks (Office) .. ..	91	30,184	15 0	30,184	15 0	..	..	210 0 0	50 0 0	..	..	110	9 0
Clerks (Works) .. ..	93	33,384	15 0	33,384	15 0	..	..	200 0 0	50 0 0	..	..	119	11 0
Clerks (Tally) .. ..	15	3,162	13 0	3,162	13 0	..	..	90 0 0	50 0 0	..	..	70	1 0
Clerks (Weighing) .. ..	3	447	8 0	444	0 0	3	8 0	..	..	2 0 0	2 0 0	49	5 0
Cleaners (Boilers, Tanks, Pumps, etc.)	82	7,270	15 0	7,242	3 0	28	12 0	..	..	1 1 0	0 15 0	29	7 0
Cleaners (Stills) .. ..	50	4,213	8 0	4,213	8 0	..	..	..	..	1 1 0	1 1 0	28	1 0
Cleaners (Jetties) .. ..	9	737	0 0	737	0 0	..	..	..	..	1 1 0	1 0 0	27	5 0
Cleaners (Paraffin Shed) .. ..	20	1,693	14 0	1,078	14 0	15	0 0	..	..	1 1 0	1 0 0	28	5 0
Cleaners (Launches) .. ..	9	843	4 0	828	10 0	14	10 0	..	..	1 1 0	1 0 0	30	11 0
Coolies (General) .. ..	2,678	2,09,515	3 0	1,94,740	8 0	14,774	11 0	..	..	1 2 0	0 15 0	24	3 0
Coolies (Process) .. ..	649	57,501	6 0	55,600	11 0	1,891	11 0	..	..	1 3 0	0 15 0	28	10 0
Coopers .. ..	11	11,460	15 0	1,340	3 0	120	12 0	..	..	1 13 0	1 9 0	40	10 0
Copper Smiths .. ..	1	109	15 0	109	15 0	..	..	..	..	2 5 0	2 5 0	56	10 0
Core Makers .. ..	3	523	0 0	522	8 0	0	8 0	..	..	2 14 0	1 13 0	58	1 0
Cranemen .. ..	14	1,379	7 0	1,351	2 0	28	5 0	..	..	1 9 0	1 5 0	32	3 0
Dippers (Tanks) .. ..	3	339	4 0	339	4 0	..	..	..	..	1 6 0	1 1 0	37	11 0
Draughtsmen and Tracers .. ..	4	945	0 0	945	0 0	..	..	135 0 0	35 0 0	..	..	78	12 0
Drivers (Loco, etc.) .. ..	13	2,667	5 0	2,466	0 0	202	5 0	..	..	3 6 0	1 12 0	63	3 0
Drivers (Motor Car) .. ..	17	2,605	2 0	2,605	2 0	..	..	55 0 0	50 0 0	..	..	51	1 0
Drivers (Launches) .. ..	9	1,768	10 0	1,708	0 0	60	10 0	..	..	2 1 0	1 10 0	63	4 0
Duffries .. ..	2	195	0 0	195	0 0	..	..	35 0 0	30 0 0	..	..	32	8 0
Durwans and Messengers .. ..	164	12,481	9 0	12,375	1 0	106	8 0	34 0 0	16 0 0	..	..	25	2 0
Electricians .. ..	3	924	4 0	918	7 0	5	13 0	175 0 0	175 0 0	2 11 0	2 9 0	102	1 0
Engineers (Assistant) .. ..	12	7,045	5 0	7,045	5 0	..	..	250 0 0	125 0 0	..	..	195	11 0

Enginemen .. .. .	24	2,889 5 0	2,802 8 0	56 13 0	..	..	2 11 0	1 1 0	38 15 0
Fire Masters .. .. .	11	4,279 10 0	4,270 10 0	..	225 0 0	60 0 0	..	..	120 11 0
Firemen .. .. .	120	18,083 14 0	17,923 11 0	160 3 0	225 0 0	150 0 0	1 13 0	1 1 0	46 5 0
Firemen and Kalasces (Launches) ..	64	7,090 5 0	6,953 13 0	138 8 0	..	..	1 2 0	1 2 0	36 3 0
Foremen and Gunners .. .. .	39	18,810 0 0	18,810 0 0	..	250 0 0	60 0 0	..	..	160 12 0
Gas Wallahs .. .. .	5	568 4 0	568 4 0	..	40 0 0	35 0 0	..	..	37 14 0
Gate Keepers .. .. .	17	9,604 3 0	9,604 3 0	..	190 0 0	100 0 0	..	..	188 5 0
Hammermen .. .. .	19	1,593 7 0	1,560 5 0	33 2 0	..	..	1 1 0	1 1 0	27 6 0
Hoopers .. .. .	14	853 5 0	853 5 0	..	PW	PW	..	..	20 5 0
Jamedars .. .. .	3	555 0 0	555 0 0	..	80 0 0	50 0 0	..	..	61 11 0
Kalascas (Boats) .. .. .	352	30,345 15 0	30,345 15 0	..	..	..	0 15 0	0 15 0	28 12 0
Kalascas (Tanker Moorings) .. .. .	37	4,345 7 0	4,246 4 0	97 3 0	..	..	1 4 0	1 4 0	38 4 0
Lead Burners .. .. .	3	652 4 0	652 4 0	..	..	..	3 6 0	2 5 0	72 8 0
Maistries (all kinds) .. .. .	170	28,158 9 0	26,777 8 0	1,381 1 0	200 0 0	37 0 0	3 13 0	1 1 0	52 6 0
Machinemen (Candle Limited) .. .. .	105	7,215 15 0	7,215 15 0	..	PW	PW	..	..	22 15 0
Machinemen and Turners (Workshop) ..	90	16,236 14 0	16,052 7 0	186 7 0	..	..	3 0 0	0 15 0	59 7 0
Mallies, Cooks and Butlers .. .. .	293	21,962 2 0	21,962 2 0	..	41 0 0	23 0 0	..	..	25 0 0
Medical Attendants .. .. .	4	587 12 0	587 12 0	..	70 0 0	30 0 0	..	..	49 0 0
Moulders .. .. .	24	3,647 8 0	3,613 14 0	33 8 0	..	..	3 0 0	1 6 0	50 3 0
Motor Attendants .. .. .	39	3,614 4 0	3,550 10 0	63 10 0	..	..	1 1 0	1 0 0	30 6 0
Oilmen (C O <sup>2</sup> Pumps, etc.) .. .. .	48	4,560 12 0	4,533 4 0	27 8 0	..	..	1 1 0	1 0 0	31 8 0
Oilmen (Launches) .. .. .	16	2,325 7 0	2,280 5 0	45 2 0	..	..	1 9 0	1 2 0	47 8 0
Packers (Candles) .. .. .	159	9,985 7 0	9,943 1 0	42 6 0	PW	PW	0 13 0	0 13 0	20 14 0
Pansmen .. .. .	9	704 4 0	637 4 0	67 0 0	..	..	1 1 0	1 1 0	23 10 0
Painters (Carpenter shop) .. .. .	6	1,136 3 0	1,128 10 0	7 9 0	..	..	2 9 0	2 0 0	62 11 0
Pattern Makers .. .. .	3	882 8 0	880 14 0	1 10 0	140 0 0	140 0 0	3 1 0	3 1 0	97 14 0
Planters .. .. .	2	371 10 0	330 6 0	41 4 0	..	..	2 13 0	2 13 0	55 1 0
Police Inspectors .. .. .	1	225 0 0	225 0 0	..	75 0 0	75 0 0	..	..	75 0 0
Printers .. .. .	1	360 0 0	360 0 0	..	120 0 0	120 0 0	..	..	120 0 0
Pumpmen (All kinds) .. .. .	185	19,056 10 0	18,958 10 0	97 12 0	..	..	1 7 0	1 1 0	34 3 0
Rivettors .. .. .	103	17,503 2 0	16,206 12 0	1,296 6 0	..	..	2 14 0	1 13 0	52 7 0
Sail Makers .. .. .	6	651 15 0	651 15 0	..	..	..	1 7 0	1 2 0	36 4 0
Sampanmen .. .. .	7	744 13 0	744 13 0	..	34 0 0	34 0 0	1 2 0	1 2 0	35 7 0
Sample Drawers .. .. .	26	2,066 15 0	2,066 15 0	..	30 0 0	20 0 0	..	..	26 8 0
Serangs (Launches) .. .. .	14	3,741 9 0	3,733 7 0	8 2 0	105 0 0	80 0 0	1 10 0	1 10 0	88 14 0
Shed Erectors .. .. .	23	2,306 14 0	2,217 0 0	89 14 0	..	..	1 5 0	1 5 0	32 2 0
Solderers .. .. .	13	1,268 0 0	1,174 10 0	93 6 0	..	..	1 13 0	1 1 0	30 2 0
Stillsmen .. .. .	67	7,286 6 0	7,286 6 0	..	..	..	1 7 0	1 1 0	36 4 0
Stove Operators (Alanmor) .. .. .	7	935 10 0	935 10 0	..	56 0 0	36 0 0	..	..	44 9 0
Sweepers .. .. .	82	5,898 14 0	5,882 12 0	16 2 0	26 0 0	24 0 0	1 0 0	0 15 0	23 15 0
Switch Board Attendants .. .. .	4	855 0 0	855 0 0	..	75 0 0	70 0 0	..	..	71 4 0
Secoanics (Launches) .. .. .	18	2,870 10 0	2,802 6 0	68 4 0	..	..	1 9 0	1 9 0	51 14 0
Steel Casks Assemblers .. .. .	4	425 15 0	378 12 0	47 3 0	..	..	1 13 0	1 5 0	31 9 0
Tally Wallahs .. .. .	6	548 5 0	528 6 0	17 15 0	..	..	1 5 0	1 3 0	29 6 0
Tank Attendants .. .. .	3	321 5 0	318 14 0	2 7 0	..	..	1 6 0	1 1 0	35 7 0

contd.

Summary of occupation for the quarter ending 31st December 1928—continued.

Reference: Subject XII—Wages (96) and (102).

Occupation.	Average No. of men employed.	Total Labour Cost including Overtime.		Labour Cost including Overtime.		Cost of Overtime.		Men on				Average cost per man per mensem.	
								Monthly Rate.		Daily Rate.			
								Max.	Min.	Max.	Min.		
		Rs.	A. P.	Rs.	A. P.	Rs.	A. P.					Rs.	A. P.
Telephone Staff (Operators only) ..	9	1,753	1 0	1,753	1 0	..	..	70 0 0	50 0 0	..	..	64	15 0
Telephone Staff (excluding Operators)	17	2,024	1 0	2,024	1 0	..	..	31 0 0	25 0 0	..	..	39	11 0
Testers .. ..	82	15,114	5 0	15,114	5 0	..	..	200 0 0	32 0 0	..	..	61	7 0
Tindals (Benches) .. ..	47	9,137	7 0	9,127	14 0	9 9 0	..	200 0 0	80 0 0	..	..	64	12 0
Tindals (C O <sup>2</sup> , Engines and etc.) ..	22	4,933	1 0	4,929	6 0	3 11 0	..	80 0 0	80 0 0	3 0 0	1 8 0	74	11 0
Tindals (Steam Boilers) .. ..	8	1,858	4 0	1,858	4 0	..	..	..	..	2 9 0	1 13 0	77	7 0
Tindals (Boats) .. ..	60	6,220	2 0	6,220	2 0	..	..	..	..	1 2 0	1 2 0	34	0 0
Tindals (Launches) .. ..	12	3,487	8 0	3,487	8 0	..	..	105 0 0	90 0 0	..	..	96	14 0
Tinsmiths .. ..	32	2,974	13 0	2,973	13 0	1 0 0	..	..	..	1 7 0	1 5 0	31	0 0
Vicemen .. ..	472	89,895	3 0	87,166	3 0	2,729 0 0	..	125 0 0	55 0 0	3 6 0	2 1 0	61	9 0
Welders .. ..	59	9,545	14 0	9,010	4 0	535 10 0	..	..	..	2 9 0	1 3 0	50	14 0
Weighmen .. ..	1	86	1 0	80	3 0	5 14 0	..	..	..	1 1 0	1 1 0	26	12 0
Winohmen .. ..	4	342	12 0	342	12 0	..	..	..	..	1 8 0	1 8 0	28	9 0
Wiremen .. ..	28	5,161	9 0	5,000	1 0	161 8 0	..	50 0 0	50 0 0	3 9 0	1 9 0	59	8 0
Washermen and Ironer .. ..	6	597	0 0	597	0 0	..	..	60 0 0	37 0 0	..	..	33	3 0
Total ..	7,370	8,41,312	12 0	8,15,453	1 0	25,859 11 0	..	..	..	..	..	..	..

ORDINARY OVERTIME RATES.

Annas 2 per hr. up to Re. 1/- daily rate (8 hrs.)  
 " 2½ " " over Re. 1/- and up to Re. 1/4.  
 " 3 " " " Ra. 1/4 " " Ra. 1/8 etc., etc.

**DUNNEDAW INSTALLATION.**  
*Occupation summary for the fourth quarter ending 31st December 1928.*

Occupation.	Average No. of men employed.	Total Labour Cost including Overtime.	Cost of Overtime.	Total Labour cost excluding Overtime.	Rate of pay.				Average cost per man per mensem (excluding Overtime.)
					Daily.		Monthly.		
					Max.	Min.	Max.	Min.	
		Rs. A. P.		Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.
Clerks .. .. .	66	20,329 9 0	..	20,329 9 0	..	..	280 0 0	50 0 0	102 10 0
Typists .. .. .	2	825 0 0	..	825 0 0	..	..	185 0 0	90 0 0	137 8 0
Telephone Operators .. .. .	2	492 9 0	..	492 9 0	..	..	90 0 0	75 0 0	82 1 0
Gate Keepers .. .. .	5	1,587 11 0	..	1,587 11 0	..	..	140 0 0	100 0 0	105 13 0
Office Boy .. .. .	1	81 0 0	..	81 0 0	..	..	27 0 0	27 0 0	27 0 0
Sweepers and Sanitary Coolies .. .. .	6	517 8 0	..	517 8 0	2 0 0	0 14 0	..	..	28 12 0
Firemen .. .. .	7	829 13 0	0 15	828 14 0	1 6 0	1 2 0	..	..	39 8 0
Pumpmen .. .. .	3	293 4 0	..	293 4 0	7 1 0	1 1 0	..	..	32 9 0
Engine Tinklers and Enginemen .. .. .	8	1,613 11 0	9 6	1,604 5 0	9 10 0	1 0 0	..	..	66 13 0
Gunners .. .. .	6	2,805 0 0	..	2,805 0 0	..	..	350 0 0	135 0 0	187 0 0
Foremen .. .. .	6	4,650 0 0	..	4,650 0 0	..	..	400 0 0	100 0 0	258 5 0
Vicemen .. .. .	66	13,791 4 0	1,025 5	12,765 15 0	4 2 0	1 9 0	..	..	64 7 0
Vicemen (Apprentice) .. .. .	6	556 2 0	22 10	533 8 0	1 8 0	0 8 0	50 0 0	50 0 0	29 10 0
Riveters .. .. .	27	4,671 8 0	237 15	4,433 9 0	3 1 0	2 1 0	..	..	54 11 0
Oil Tester .. .. .	1	122 1 0	..	122 1 0	1 5 0	1 5 0	..	..	40 11 0
Filter Maistry .. .. .	1	97 5 0	..	97 5 0	1 4 0	1 4 0	..	..	32 7 0
Turners .. .. .	11	2,776 10 0	330 3	2,445 7 0	4 14 0	2 5 0	..	..	74 1 0
Turners (Apprentice) .. .. .	2	208 4 0	22 4	186 0 0	1 8 0	1 0 0	..	..	31 0 0
Beltmen .. .. .	2	194 12 0	20 6	174 6 0	1 4 0	1 4 0	..	..	29 1 0
Moulders .. .. .	2	414 14 0	1 4	413 10 0	3 6 0	2 5 0	..	..	68 15 0
Machinemen .. .. .	110	8,948 2 0	414 6	8,533 12 0	3 6 0	0 12 0	93 0 0	93 0 0	25 14 0
Welders .. .. .	3	473 18 0	44 7	429 6 0	2 14 0	1 6 0	..	..	47 11 0
Hammermen .. .. .	6	502 10 0	27 13	474 13 0	1 1 0	1 0 0	..	..	28 6 0
Coppersmiths .. .. .	2	333 11 0	9 2	324 9 0	3 1 0	1 4 0	..	..	54 1 0
Blacksmiths .. .. .	6	1,311 9 0	66 9	1,245 0 0	3 10 0	2 9 0	..	..	69 2 0
Painters .. .. .	36	2,699 6 0	5 11	2,693 11 0	2 9 0	0 12 0	..	..	24 15 0
Pattern Maker .. .. .	1	256 8 0	14 9	241 15 0	3 1 0	3 1 0	..	..	80 10 0
Carpenters .. .. .	8	1,727 13 0	48 9	1,679 4 0	3 6 0	2 9 0	..	..	69 15 0
Case Makers .. .. .	4	232 13 0	4 0	228 13 0	0 14 0	0 14 0	..	..	19 1 0
Coolies .. .. .	882	63,163 12 0	2,467 15	60,715 13 0	1 9 0	0 12 0	..	..	22 15 0

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Occupation.	Average No. of men employed.	Total Labour Cost including Overtime.	Cost of Overtime.	Total Labour cost excluding Overtime.	Rate of pay.				Average cost per man per mensem (excluding overtime.)
					Daily.		Monthly.		
					Max.	Min.	Max.	Min.	
		Rs. A. P.		Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.
Motor Car and Lorry Drivers ..	14	1,984 13 0	..	1,984 13 0	..	..	60 0 0	45 0 0	47 4 0
Cleaners .. ..	8	726 8 0	1-14	724 10 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	..	..	30 3 0
Durwans .. ..	39	3,186 0 0	..	3,186 0 0	..	..	60 0 0	25 0 0	27 3 0
Messenger Boys .. ..	3	162 0 0	0-12	161 4 0	0 14 0	0 12 0	16 0 0	16 0 0	16 13 0
Tin smiths .. ..	14	2,008 11 0	37-2	1,969 9 0	3 6 0	1 4 0	..	..	46 14 0
Tin solderers .. ..	120	9,628 12 0	128-8	9,500 4 0	2 5 0	1 0 0	..	..	26 6 0
Tin examiners .. ..	45	3,109 6 0	15-14	3,093 8 0	1 7 0	0 12 0	..	..	22 14 0
Tinshed Stock Keepers .. ..	1	110 14 0	2-2	108 12 0	2 4 0	1 4 0	..	..	36 4 0
Locomotive Engine Driver .. ..	1	270 0 0	..	270 0 0	..	..	90 0 0	90 0 0	90 0 0
Electric Wiremen .. ..	5	1,277 15 0	37-1	1,240 14 0	4 4 0	2 0 0	..	..	82 11 0
Cooks for Cooly Line .. ..	2	144 0 0	..	144 0 0	..	..	24 0 0	24 0 0	24 0 0
Mallies .. ..	20	1,451 15 0	..	1,451 15 0	..	..	24 0 0	20 0 0	24 3 0
Bricklayers .. ..	7	1,307 7 0	68-8	1,240 15 0	3 1 0	2 0 0	..	..	59 1 0
Glazier .. ..	1	79 5 0	..	79 5 0	1 2 0	1 2 0	..	..	26 7 0
Boat Tindals .. ..	2	209 4 0	..	209 4 0	1 2 0	1 2 0	..	..	34 14 0
Boat Kalassecs .. ..	6	523 2 0	..	523 2 0	0 15 0	0 15 0	..	..	29 1 0
Boat Cooks .. ..	2	174 6 0	..	174 6 0	0 15 0	0 15 0	..	..	29 1 0
Sampen Wallahs .. ..	7	798 0 0	..	798 0 0	..	..	38 0 0	38 0 0	38 0 0
<b>Total ..</b>	<b>1,584</b>	<b>1,63,669 4 0</b>	<b>5,085-2</b>	<b>1,58,604 2 0</b>	<b>..</b>	<b>..</b>	<b>..</b>	<b>..</b>	<b>..</b>

**MEMORANDUM RELATING TO 125 WOMEN EMPLOYED IN THE CANDLE  
FACTORY OF THE SYRIAM REFINERY.**

**I.—Recruitment.**

1. *Origin of Labour.*—(i) *Extent of migration.* Entirely Burmese women from the villages adjacent to the Refinery.

3. *Method of recruitment.*—(i) Engaged on recommendation by woman maistry.

(ii) *Possible improvement.* Consider above arrangement the most suitable where women are concerned.

8. *Labour Turnover.*—(i) *Average duration of employment.* We estimate the average at 7 years.

(This includes the period prior to year 1927 when these workers were employed through a contractor.)

(iii) *Absenteeism.* (a) Approx. average daily absentees 23 out of 125 women. Causes—usually private affairs.

(b) Not seasonal. See (a). Women are never shut out through lack of work.

(c)		Average monthly days lost.	Wages lost.
	Reasons unknown; usually private affairs	575	Rs. 539

The figure for wages lost is an estimate calculated at an average rate of 15 annas a day.

**II.—Staff Organisation.**

12. *Recruitment and training of supervising staff, superior and subordinate.*—(i) and (ii) Recruited from adjacent villages. There is only one Female Supervisor and she has held the post for over 20 years. When the post falls vacant the most suitable woman packer will be promoted to same.

14. *Timekeeping, piecework, contract and attendance registers.*—(i) The maistry records each woman's work, i.e. the quantity of cartons made or candles packed and this is checked by the clerk who takes these quantities into stock. This part of the work of maistry and clerk is specially supervised by the European in charge of the Candle Factory.

(ii) Wages are made up and paid by the Refinery Pay Department. The European in charge of the Candle Factory personally supervises the distribution by the Pay Department on Pay Days. This distribution is made at the Candle Factory.

**IV.—Health.**

23. (iii) *Working conditions*—(a) Very favourable. Workrooms are well ventilated and provided with pull punkahs. There is no overcrowding.

(b) No Company's work is done by employees at home.

(ii) and (iii) A sufficient number of beds are always available in the Syriam Municipal Hospital.

In this hospital there is a female ward of 6 beds and a maternity ward of 4 beds.

25. *Extent to which medical facilities are utilised.*—(ii) If a woman becomes ill on duty she is sent to the dispensary in the Works Motor Ambulance for treatment and if necessary she is subsequently sent to the Syriam Hospital. In cases of ordinary sickness the women do not take advantage of the medical facilities provided by the Company.

26. *Sanitary arrangements.*—(i) (a) ample latrine accommodation is provided for all workers and clean tap water supplied from Artesian Wells.

(ii) *Drinking water.*—(a) Piped Water from Artesian wells continually available.

(iii) *Bathing and washing.*—(a) There is a water tap which workers can use for their ablutions.

28. (i) *Control of temperature in factories.*—The working places are provided with mechanically propelled swing punkahs. Regulations are suitable and are observed.

31. *Maternity benefits.*—Not given. Before childbirth the women leave the Company's service and usually do not return. Some women have returned after a matter of years but we cannot give the percentage.

**V.—Welfare.**

32. Welfare work for women is limited to the investigation of complaints in connection with their employment; see (33).

36. The Company does not provide schools but assists financially in the building and maintenance of such by other organisations. (See also 40).

37. *Desirability and possibility of provision for old age and premature retirement.*—Unnecessary in our case as the women do not remain in our employment until they are aged.

### VII.—Safety.

46. The women not being engaged in any mechanical process, there have been no accidents.

48. First aid and medical relief always available at the Company's Dispensary in the Refinery.

### IX.—Hours.

55. *Hours worked per week and per day.*—(i) Normal, *i.e.*, as determined by custom or agreement.

(i) Women per week 46 hours, per day 8 hours in 4-hour spells with interval of 2 hours. Saturday 6 hours with brief interval for rest.

(ii) Actual, *i.e.*, including overtime. Varies considerably but never exceeds maximum allowed by Factory Act, *i.e.* 60 hours weekly.

(iii) Spreadover, *i.e.*, relation between hours worked and hours during which worker is on call. Workers are only on call during their actual working hours.

56. *Days worked per week.*—6 days.

59. Should the maximum number of hours per week be reduced it would probably lead to the employment of more women during busy periods and the consequent reduction in wages of those at present employed.

60. *Intervals.*—(i) *Existing practice.*—(a) *In relation to fatigue.*—Periods of rest are allowed. No woman is allowed to work more than 4 hours at a stretch.

(b) *In relation to workers' meal times.* 2 hours; 10-30 A.M. till 12-30 P.M.

(iv) *General Holidays to Labour* average 6 days annually. For three of those days pay is sanctioned. This applies to the female labour, even though they are on piecework, and they are paid 13 annas a day for these festival days. In the event of a worker being required to work on any of these festival days she would get 13 annas a day in addition to piecework pay earned for the amount of work done on that day.

62. We have not claimed exemption from any of the provisions as regards women workers.

81. *Effect of 1922 Act on employment.*—Made no difference as regards our women employees.

83. *Suitability of regulations for women's work.*—Suitable.

### XII.—Wages.

96. *Prevailing rates of wages (time and piece) and average earnings.*—All women employees are on piecework except the Maistry who is on a monthly rate of Rs. 60.

Average earnings for average attendance of 23 days	} .. Carton Makers (31 women)	Rs. 25/10/p.m.
.. .. .		} .. Candle Packers (94 women)

101. *Method of fixing wages.*—According to class of work.

102. *Bases of payment for overtime and Sunday work.*—Women being on piecework are paid the same rates for work done after the usual 8 hours day and are not employed on Sundays.

104. We have had no wage changes in recent years. Labour is plentiful.

105. *Minimum wages.*—No necessity for statutory establishment.

106. *Deductions.*—(i) *Extent of fining.*—Nil.

(ii) *Other deductions.*—Voluntary contribution of 1 anna per month to Workmen's Hospital Aid Fund.

107. *Periods of wage-payment (day, week or month).*—(i) Payment is made monthly.

(ii) *Periods elapsing before payment.*—9 days approximately.

(iv) Unclaimed wages are retained and can always be claimed until time-barred by statute. Any unclaimed balance then is used for employees' welfare.

109. *Bonus and profit-sharing schemes.*—None.

110. *Annual or other leave.*—Women desiring leave for any period are granted same, and no limit is placed on the leave allowed to them provided there is a satisfactory reason for leave being required. They are allowed off on all the Burmese Holidays and on each occasion usually take a number of days where the workmen would probably only take a day.

(i) *Extent to which taken by workers.*—All the women take advantage of the Burmese Holidays.

(ii) *Extent to which countenanced and/or assisted by employers.*—Work is closed down on the Burmese Holidays. There are three festival days sanctioned as holidays for men but the women are off on other festivals as well, say, 6 per annum in all.

### SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE REGARDING THE DUTIES OF THE LABOUR WELFARE SUPERINTENDENT AT THE SYRIAM REFINERY.

Eight years ago it was decided by the Management that the above post be instituted. This post to be held by an official who would have no connection with the Works Departments in order that he would be in a position to give an unbiased decision in cases of complaints from workmen regarding their treatment in the Works. No other duties to be relegated to this official in order

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that he should be able to get into close touch with the workmen. Workmen to have access to him at any time out of their working hours. For the latter purpose this official's residence is outside the Works fence and workmen can therefore appeal to him there without any difficulty. Usually the complaint is in the form of a written petition on receipt of which the Labour Welfare Superintendent takes up the matter with the head of the department concerned. After thorough investigation if the Labour Welfare Superintendent considers that the complainant has a genuine grievance he advises the department concerned how he recommends they should deal with the matter. In the event of disagreement with the department the matter is referred to the Works Manager for orders.

In addition to complaints regarding their employment the Labour Welfare Superintendent deals with complaints made by workmen regarding their relations with one another. Altogether the taking over of the above duties has relieved the Works Manager and his staff of a certain amount of work which took up a considerable portion of their time and which they could ill afford. In addition we think that we can safely state that the workmen consider the Labour Welfare Superintendent, an independent advocates of their cause, should they have a genuine grievance.

The duties of the Labour Welfare Superintendent were very soon after his engagement extended to include the charge of our housing scheme for workmen. He visits the lines daily and deals with any complaints from the residents; also passes orders for any necessary repairs to the lines. He deals with applications for accommodation and appoints headmen to look after each block. He assists the Health Officer in the supervision of the sanitary staff at the lines and draws that officer's attention to any serious irregularities. He is assisted in his duties at the lines by a whole-time overseer and has no other staff.

The Labour Welfare Superintendent visits the residences of workmen who live in the village and draws the attention of the Health Officer of the Municipality to any insanitary dwellings he comes across. He also lectures the workmen on Sanitation. The Labour Welfare Superintendent is President of the Indian Anglo-Vernacular Day and Night Schools. These Schools educate a number of our Indian employees and their children. A scheme has been passed for the erection of a new school, near our lines, to accommodate 150 day and 180 night pupils, and will soon be started. The Labour Welfare Superintendent makes periodical visits to all other schools in Syriam.

By reference to the 1929 Annual Report made by the Labour Welfare Superintendent it will be observed that he has been called on by the Oriya and Telugu communities to take up the post of President of their Temple. Hitherto there had been disputes between the different castes regarding the building and other matters and no progress could be made with the erection of a temple. Under his presidency the building has been practically completed.

The Labour Welfare Superintendent visits workmen who are in-patients of the Syriam Hospital and puts forward any complaints made by them to the Superintendent.

As regards pastimes for workmen we have a large play field which is mostly taken advantage of by our Burmese employees but recently the Chittagonians have shown an inclination to play football and no doubt in the future this field will be utilised by other workers. At the request of our Hindustani employees through the Labour Welfare Superintendent a gymnasium has been erected near the Hindustani quarters in the lines. This gymnasium is used daily. A reading room with suitable books has recently been provided for these people.

We consider that the object of the institution of the post of Labour Welfare Superintendent as explained at the beginning of this note has been fully attained. We are satisfied that our Labour Welfare Superintendent is in close touch with our workmen and has their full confidence. The Labour Welfare Superintendent is not concerned in the registration of labour for employment, recording service, etc., this being the duty of our Time and Labour Department which is controlled by Works Office Assistants.

**SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE REGARDING DUNNEEDAW INSTALLATION.**

**I.—Recruitment.**

**1. Origin of Labour. (i) Extent of Migration—Chiefly from India, viz.—**

Anglo-Indians	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	33
Burmese	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	52
Hindus	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	335
Chittagonians	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	116
Telugus or Coringhees	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	658
Oorlahs	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	135
Bengalis	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	18
Chinese	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	14
Madrasis	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	29
							<b>Total</b>	<b>1,390</b>

## 8. Labour "turnover."—(iii) Absenteeism Excluding Staff—

	Average Monthly Days lost.	Lost. Rs.
Reasons Unknown .. .. .	1,500	1,688
Sickness (Certified) .. .. .	68	81
Accidents (Certified) .. .. .	62	77
Total .. .. .	1,630	1,846

Approx. average daily absentees = 60 out of 1,300.

## III.—Housing.

16. *Extent to which housing is provided.*—(i) *By employers.*—Barracks (in two sections) to accommodate two hundred and thirty-six single persons are provided alongside the Works. In practice 166 workers are housed, the balance (70) consisting of their dependants.

*Type of Buildings*—Walls, brick; floors, cement; roofs, corrugated iron; cookhouses, brick.

Surrounding area is paved with brick on edge. All buildings have been rebuilt during this year.

(iii) *By private landlords.* (iv) *By workers themselves.*—The factory is within the limits of the City of Rangoon. Those workers who cannot be accommodated in the Company's barracks, live in streets near the Works.

17. *Facilities for acquisition of land for Workers' houses.*—There are vacant spaces near the Works. Such land would be acquired from Rangoon Development Trust but due to proximity of city, prices are high.

## U. SET, MUNICIPAL COMMISSIONER OF RANGOON.

## I.—Recruitment.

(i) *Origin of Labour.*—Ninety-five per cent. of unskilled labour in Rangoon is foreign, that is to say, not Burmese. All the unskilled labourers employed by the Corporation in various departments belong to India though recruited locally. These Indian labourers come to Rangoon during the busy season and pick up such employment as they can get. Rangoon has become one of the largest immigration ports on account of the seasonal coming in and going-out of Indian labourers. There have been no marked changes as regards recruitment in recent years. The permanent labour staff of the Corporation is recruited through cooly maistries who are in touch with the labourers of their own race. No difficulty has ever been experienced in getting the required number of labourers at any time.

(ii) *Contact with villages.*—It is not possible to state to what extent Indian labourers keep or are able to keep themselves in touch with their own villages. Those who leave their families behind send remittances home.

(iv) *Extent and effects of disturbance of family life.*—As ninety per cent. of the labourers come alone without their families and as available housing accommodation is very limited for them while they are in Rangoon there cannot be any semblance of family life at all. Ordinarily the permanent labourers go back to their country once in three years.

(vii) *Unemployment.*—As quite a large number of Indians come to Burma yearly in the expectation of getting employment, when the busy season is over a large number must be thrown out of employment unless they go back to their own country. Being illiterate, Indian labourers have no means of previously arranging for regular employment before they leave their country.

(viii) *Labour 'turnover'.*—The extent of absences may be put down at 5 per cent. usually through sickness. Temporary men are taken on either on temporary employment, or if permanent men are absent either on leave or through sickness. The extent of such casual employment may be put down at 15 per cent.

## II.—Staff Organisation.

Each department is under the control of a Head of a Department with subordinate officers under him. The managing staff is recruited by selection from applicants. In technical departments the supervising staff must possess qualifications from technical schools or colleges. The subordinate supervising staff are recruited from men with a fair standard of general education

and they become efficient through experience. As a rule no workmen can be promoted to the supervising staff solely because they are illiterate. The relations between the staff and labour, generally speaking, may be said to be good. There are no work councils or industrial councils. Time-keepers are appointed and attendance registers called muster rolls are maintained by subordinate officers. Wages are paid by an Accountant direct to the labourers themselves in the presence of a member of the supervising staff. Works, except maintenance works, are given out on contracts; sub-contracting exists. Working conditions are controlled by the superior staff as much as possible and sub-contracting, although not recognised, cannot be entirely stopped.

### III.—Housing.

The Corporation has decided to provide housing to the labour staff of the Conservancy Department. It has not been possible to provide housing accommodation for the labour staffs of the other departments on any large scale. When it is considered that the staff should reside in a particular locality for the efficient discharge of their duties, housing is either provided or certain allowances are given. About 20 per cent. of the labourers are at present housed in Corporation buildings. Those who are not provided with housing accommodation have to find their own accommodation and the practice is for them to club together and live in crowded rooms paying rents from Re. 1 to Rs. 3 per month per head. Floor space per man is 36 sq. ft. in a room for eight. Lighting, except in big barracks, has to be arranged by the men themselves. The conservancy and water supply are arranged for by the Corporation. Those for whom no housing provision is made by employers have to find their own accommodation. As a rule large rooms are rented by maistries and rents are levied *per capita* by them from labourers. The conditions under which labourers have to live cannot be said to be satisfactory either from a moral or sanitary point of view. Private landlords cannot get a fair return on their capital unless overcrowding with its attendant evils, is resorted to.

### IV.—Health.

The Corporation has dispensaries in the town at which workmen can get free medical treatment in case of sickness or injury. No special statistics are collected to show figures of mortality among the labourers employed by the Corporation. No special method of registering births and deaths among labourers are adopted. The general conditions of health, physique, living conditions at home, over-crowding and the addiction to drink and drug evil of the labouring class community as a whole in this city in relationship to the prevailing diseases in the city and the mortality rate in general have been described at some length in the Health Officers' Annual Reports for the years 1924, 1925 and 1927 and in the Memorandum submitted by the Health Officer to the Health Enquiry Committee at page 113 of Volume I of the Report. Short extracts therefrom pertaining to the subject under headings iii to vii of the questionnaire are given herewith.

(1) The death rate in this town is much influenced by the constant movements of the migratory population. The port of Rangoon is one of the largest emigration and immigration ports in the world. The total number of immigrants coming through this port far exceeds 300,000 per annum. An equal number is found to leave this port every year. Rangoon City forms the centre of this movement and besides absorbing a large proportion of this migratory population, almost all of these emigrating and immigrating populations pass a short or long period at one time or another of their journey in this town. At every in-coming and out-going season, our town accommodates an extremely large number of these people and the total population of the town far exceeds the number given in the last census report. The actual death returns are calculated on the last census population and hence the rate calculated shows a higher return than what it actually is.

(2) The second great factor affecting the death rate of a town is the age and sex distribution of the population in that town. The death rate among the males is uniformly higher than among females. Similarly the very young and the old have higher death rates. In our town the male population is more than double that of the female, *viz.*, 238,716 males and 106,789 females.

Again the population of children under 5 years of age and that of persons above the age of 50, constitute nearly 13 per cent. of the total.

The death rates in these two groups of life are nearly seven times higher than the mean average of the intermediate groups of life. It follows therefore that our town, in which a large proportion of the inhabitants consists of age groups less favourable to long life, would obviously show a higher death rate.

(3) The third great factor in the general health and mortality of the inhabitants of any town is the marked influence exerted by the density of the population. It is a well recognised fact all over the world that the higher the density of population, the greater the sickness rate and the higher the mortality rate. This fact will be found well illustrated in the table of mortality rate from tuberculosis given at page 56 of the last Annual Report where the highest mortality rates are recorded from areas most densely over-crowded.

This town unfortunately is not only subjected to this colossal density per square mile but to another and more baneful density of over-crowding in rooms. The greatest harm comes from this over-crowding in living rooms. The true density that must be considered more important is the number of persons living together in each room. The number of persons on a given area gives, so to say, the gross density of the population. The figures given in the said table for this gross density of population per square mile in some of the most important and industrial quarters of the town are simply colossal. Lanmadaw 113,241 per square mile; Taroktan 168,838, North-west Town 106,854 and North-east Town 135,524 per square mile.

The mean density of English population is about 551 persons per square mile, the mean of the whole Province of Burma is 94 per square mile and that of Rangoon 11,365 per square mile.

Coming to density per each living room, the figures of over-crowding found and prevalent in our town are simply appalling. The Census standard of over-crowding is anything over two persons to a room. In our town 20 to 40 persons per room is rather a rule than the exception.

In crowded communities it is a matter of vital importance whether 500, 1,000 or 5,000 or more persons are living on a square mile. Where this ratio goes up to 160,000 and over per square mile as in our town, the disastrous effects on such a population could be better imagined than described. Early and rapid spread of infectious diseases is not the only evil in such instances. Over-crowding means poverty, ignorance of the most rudimentary laws of health, intemperance, drink, drug, depravity and crime. It is not so much the over-crowding itself but the absence of proper air, light and sunshine and those other factors, mostly drink and drug addiction which are associated with it that produce this high death rate in such towns like Rangoon.

(4) Another great factor is the influence for good or otherwise which occupation has upon the general health and mortality of a town. Our town is unique in more respects than one. A great majority of the population is composed of the migratory labour population. The permanent residents of the town hardly comprise one-third of the total population. In this latter even the majority are of the lower grades of life.

Thus the bulk of our population constitutes that large class of the labour population, sweated labour as all the world over, with its concomitant penury, ignorance, drink, drug, and other evils of their most unfortunate social conditions of life.

(5) Another great factor in the high death rate of our town is the wide extent of the drink and drug evil prevalent in the labouring class of the community. Ill-clad, ill-fed, ill-housed, it is notorious how these people succumb to the vile temptations offered by the drink and drug shops so promiscuously scattered close to their industrial and living quarters, which sap the last drop of blood out of their half starved bodies. The disastrous effects of alcoholic drink, *Mawaza*, toddy and drugs like opium, morphine and cocaine are usually very insidious in origin and the general health is so undermined in time that they form essential agents in the causation of various ailments and render their victims ready prey to various diseases. A random visit any day to these various haunts of intemperance, drink and drugs will reveal most glaringly the cause of so much sickness, disease and crime that fill our jails, lunatic asylums and the burial grounds with their habitual victims. With such disastrous evil effects of drink on the body and mind of these ill-clad, ill-housed, half-starved community of the population of our town, it is little wonder dearth, diseases and death are so rampant. The real wonder is the general death rate is so low compared to these vicious surroundings. The worst of it is that it is this community that forms the bulk of the population in our town.

Some idea of the extent of the drug evil prevalent may be gained from the large amount of contraband articles seized by the Police every month, and it is a well-noted fact that for every pound of the articles seized, hundred times or more of it is safely smuggled undetected.

The League of Nations have fixed a standard figure of 12 lbs. of opium per annum for 10,000 population to meet medical requirements. The average for all India is stated to be 24 lbs., whereas in Assam it is 104 lbs., in Punjab 130 lbs., in Bombay 86 lbs., in Calcutta 287 lbs. and in Rangoon 218 lbs. These figures clearly indicate the extent of the drug habit prevalent in particular towns.

The wide extent of the illicit traffic in opium and other narcotic drugs in Rangoon is not a closed secret and the havoc done in the large body of its victims could be seen in the jails, lunatic asylums and the annual death returns of the town.

(6) Another most potent cause of increased sickness and the increased number of deaths in our town is the large number of imported cases suffering from various infectious diseases coming into our town from various parts of the province by rail, road and river. Some of them enter the town while suffering in the acute stage of the disease and some in the incubation stage developing the disease after the arrival here. All these cases of acute infection come to light only when death occurs or when a house to house search is carried out by the Health Department on suspicions being aroused or when the epidemic is prevalent.

In densely over-crowded rooms, houses and areas with the most primitive standard of social life and where poverty, squalor and filth reign supreme, the disastrous consequences

and rapid spread of infection from a single suffering case of an infectious or dangerous disease among them may be better imagined than described.

Last year a total number of 228 cases suffering from small-pox alone were definitely ascertained to have been imported cases of the disease from other parts of the province and some more must have escaped detection.

Similarly plague accounted for 40 imported cases and cholera 13, during the year under reference. From the statements given herewith showing the number of attacks, deaths and the number of imported cases month by month from plague, cholera and small-pox for the past ten years, it will be clearly evident how badly exposed our town is to the advent of various infectious diseases imported into our city from various parts of the province. Plague, cholera and small-pox are more or less endemic in the whole province of Burma.

As for plague every effort is being made by the Health Department to eradicate the epizootic of rats which is the precursor of human plague and though successful to a degree, the town is yet at the mercy of other parts of the province from where all the rice and paddy come to Rangoon town which is the greatest granary of the world. With this rice and paddy, come also plague-infected rodents and there is absolutely no control whatever to prevent these outside infected rodents entering the town.

As for cholera, our town is equally at the mercy of other parts of the province. With our pipe water supply we are practically protected against the inroads of this disease but there is absolutely no protection against the imported cases of this disease from parts of the province where cholera is perennially raging. Almost all the cases of cholera occurring in our town are the contact cases of one or more of the imported ones to begin with.

As for small-pox, if any thing, our town is in a worse plight. The permanent population of our town is in an extremely well state of protection by primary vaccination. Thousands and thousands of the migratory population are being vaccinated and protected by the Health Department every year. Last year alone, out of the total population of three and a half lacs, over a lac and a quarter of the population was vaccinated by the Health Department of this town but unfortunately there is no control whatsoever on the very large number of this migratory population constantly on the move from various parts of the province.

The Corporation is appointing three qualified Nurse-Midwives to attend to confinement cases of the poor in their own homes, free of cost, within the pucca area of the town. A part-time medical officer is employed also to give free medical attendance to the Corporation staff at the Compressor Station, Yegu Pumping Station, the Fire Brigade Station and the Motor Transport Depot.

The bulk of the Corporation labourers work in the streets or on open roads where working conditions are satisfactory. As the large majority of labourers come to Rangoon without their wives, sex morality amongst them is bound to be very low. In the coolie barracks so far provided by the Corporation, arrangements are made for latrines, bathing and washing. These barracks are inspected periodically by the sanitary staff of the Corporation and the sanitary conditions of the barracks are fairly satisfactory. Statements showing births and deaths and infantile mortality rates and also figures of emigrants and immigrants for the past ten years and statement showing total number of registered buildings in Rangoon giving full details of these houses and results of inspection for over-crowding for the past four years are attached.

*Education.*—There are no educational facilities for Indian workers. On account of the illiteracy of the labour class it would be very difficult to provide any educational facilities for their children. The Corporation is opening gradually free vernacular schools. Beyond that no other facilities for education of the children of labourers is contemplated.

*Working hours.*—They vary from 48 hours to 50 hours a week.

*Wages.*—The wages of the labouring class in the employ of the Corporation range from Rs. 18 to Rs. 22 a month and in the case of maistries from Rs. 23 to Rs. 30 a month. There has been a tendency for wages to increase but not to a very large extent. The minimum wages at one time was Rs. 12 and this has now been raised to Rs. 18 per month. This increase is due to general rise in prices. A labourer earning Rs. 20 a month ordinarily can save from about Rs. 6 to Rs. 10 per month provided he is not addicted to drinking or the drug habit. Those who are employed beyond their working hours are given overtime on the basis of their regular pay. As there is no scarcity of labour it does not seem necessary or advisable to fix the minimum wages by statutory deductions. Punishment by fines is very rare. Payment of wages for each month is made monthly, that is to say, about the 8th to 15th of the following month.

*Leave.*—Permanent men take leave once in about three years to go back to their own country. No leave is granted to temporary or casual workmen.

*Industrial efficiency of workers.*—There has been no appreciable change of efficiency of industrial workers in recent years.

*Trade Combinations.*—There are practically no Trade Unions or Councils in Rangoon.

## REPRESENTATIVES OF INDIAN LABOUR IN BURMA.

### I.—Recruitment.

3. (i) We believe it will be better for us and facilitate the work of the Commission if we give reference of the standard work on the subject, namely, "Report of an enquiry into the standard and cost of living of the working classes in Rangoon" By J. J. Bennison, paras. 181 and 182, in which the different methods are given in detail and which are substantially correct. In such matters as our information differs from that of the Report we shall make a note to that effect.

[Reference is made to pp. 181-227 of Mr. Bennison's report.]

From the above the following facts stand out clearly:—

Recruited Labour:

(1) That recruited labour is mainly confined to—(a) Paddy carriers in Rice Mills. (b) Labour for landing coal and salt.

(2) Recruited labour is paid advances from Rs. 25 to Rs. 100 per head in India. (3) On arrival thumb impressions or signatures are taken on an agreement or a blank sheet of paper which is filled in later, and/or (4) A promissory note is taken. (5) Payment is made by the employer through maistries. (6) For the paddy carrier the period of work is about six months in the year. (7) Labour does not leave Burma generally immediately the Rice Mills close working for the year, but continues to remain in Burma from 1 to 3 years. (8) Indebtedness of recruited paddy carriers to maistries continues for a very long period. (9) Deductions from wages are made. (10) Interest is charged on loans.

Labour engaged in Burma.—(1) The following are engaged locally:—(a) Chittagonian labour for Rice Mills. (b) Bagging and stitching—Telugu labour for Rice Mills. (c) All the labour for Saw Mills.

Labour in other factories.—(d) Shipping labour. (e) Wharf labour. (f) Cargo Boatmen. (g) Coal and salt labour. (h) Labour employed by public bodies. (i) Transport labour. (k) Contractor's labour for earth and stone work.

(2) The following of the above work under the maistry system:—(b) Bagging and stitching labour in Rice Mills. (c) Telugu and Uriya labour in Saw Mills. (d) Shipping labour. (e) Wharf labour. (f) Cargo boatmen. (g) Coal and salt labour. (k) Contractor's labour for earth and stone work.

- (3) All the labour which works under the maistry system is paid wages through the maistry.
- (4) Indebtedness of the labourer to maistry for long periods [classes (b) and (c)].
- (5) Deductions by maistries from wages earned by labour, in other ways with regard to 1 (b) and 1 (c).
- (6) Interest is charged on loans.

We thus see that, so far as recruitment of labour in India is concerned, it is confined to certain class of labour only, the numbers of which may be calculated at about 20,000 for the Rice Mills, and another 5,000 for contractors for road making, earth cutting, etc. Therefore we may say that out of 3½ lacs, 25,000 labourers are recruited in India. Their main grievance is that—(1) loans are given in India, but agreements made in Burma; (2) the method and manner of recovering of loans; (3) payment of wages made through maistries.

With regard to Indian labour recruited in Burma and worked through the maistry system their grievances are—(1) indebtedness to maistries [class (2) (b) and (c)]. (2) Deductions for class (2) (b) and (c) made by maistries. (3) Payments made through maistries for all under class (2).

3. (ii) We have brought out clearly the grievances and the disabilities of the recruited labour and that of locally employed in the foregoing paragraph; we will now deal with possible improvements.

Recruited Labour. We propose that—

(1) there shall be a Government officer at Calcutta and Madras ports from which labourers come in large numbers; (2) every maistry who recruits labour shall pay before such officer any loan he may give to the recruited labourer, and any agreement or other document he wishes to get from the labourer shall be signed or thumb impression affixed before such officer, and every such agreement or document shall be countersigned by such officer and the seal of his office affixed to it. No other document than this shall be recognised as proof of payment of loan or as an agreement existing between a recruited labourer and the maistry; (3) no loan given to the recruited labour shall be of a sum greater than six times half the monthly wage; (4) any loans not recovered within six months shall lapse; (5) any agreement between the labourer and the recruiting maistry shall not be for more than six months' period. It shall clearly mention the nature of the work and also the monthly wages and shall specifically mention that there shall be no other deductions from the wages except for time being which the labourer may through sickness or through leave be unable to attend work.

Labour engaged locally. We propose that—(1) any loan that may be given to the labourer shall be paid in the presence of the ultimate employer or in the presence of an Honorary Magistrate who shall certify to that effect; (2) the maistries shall receive an agreed remuneration either per head of labourer employed or on percentage of work done; (3) the gang maistries shall be paid direct by the ultimate employer on a basis of wages for two men's per day of work and he shall not charge or make any deduction on the wages of the labourers; (4) the labourer shall be paid by the employer direct; (5) for daily workers the payment shall be made daily; we would however concede that daily payments may in some cases cause difficulties and in such cases we would agree to weekly payments; (6) in all factories payment shall be made within forty-five days; (7) in all outside labour, if by month, payment shall be made within forty-five days; (8) in case of contravention of 5, 6 and 7 any labourer may file a suit against any employer who is liable to pay his wages on a court fee of 4 annas; (9) if the Government of any province which sends out a large number of labourers to Burma desires to maintain a labour officer to keep in touch and to bring to the notice of the Government any particular disabilities from which labour may be suffering and to generally help the labour, it may be made possible to do so.

3. (iii) (a) We do not think the maistry system could altogether be done away with. Any public (non-official) employment agencies would be more or less a repetition of the maistry system the exactions being made in a more underground manner. We think there is room for official agencies, not particularly for employment but also for looking after the well-being of labour. Large number of labour comes from Madras, Bengal and Bihar and Orissa. The Provincial Governments may now consider it advisable to keep in closer touch with the labour which comes to Burma and at the same time be able to help in recruiting.

Suggestions: We suggest that—

(a) the Central or Provincial Governments (we would prefer the latter) desiring to maintain a labour officer in Burma, be given every facility to do so by the Government of Burma; (b) the work of such labour officer would be to look after the labour of the province which he represents, and bring to the notice of his Government and of the Government of Burma any particular hardships to labour; (c) he would be the person to whom labour would first go to for advice in all labour matters for compensation, etc., etc.; (d) he would see that recruited labour was brought under satisfactory terms and conditions, and that those terms and conditions were observed by the recruiting agency as well as the recruited labour; (e) he would be the person before whom loans should be given to labour and his seal affixed to prove the loan; (f) he could help in the recruiting of labour if his help was desired by any employer requiring labour; (g) if a recruited labourer leaves the country without repayment of loan, the officer would help in recovering the said loan; (h) if labour is recruited through this officer the transaction would be on commercial lines. Some commission per head of recruited labour be fixed for recruiting expenditure. The terms of loans, etc., would be an arrangement between the employer and the officer; proper accounts would be rendered of moneys advanced; (i) the labour officer would be able to gain information from large labour organizations as to their probable labour requirements for the season, and thus form an estimate of the total number required. His Government would in such a case be able to check an over supply; (k) the officer would also be in touch with the development of indigenous labour and be able to advise his Government of probable reduction of demand for Indian labour. This would be in the interest of indigenous as well as of Indian labour; (l) it would be in the interest of Burma as well as of India or of the provinces that any check required on the coming of labour to Burma should be on the other side of the Bay of Bengal. In our opinion it is time that Provincial Governments took a closer interest in labour leaving their shores.

4. *Extent and effects of disturbance of family life.*

(2) Indian labour.

(a) *Extent.*—Census Report of Burma, 1921. Summary of Imperial Table XIV, pages 216-17, Part II.

(b) *Effect on Disturbance of Family Life.—General.*

(1) *Indigenous race*—no effect.

(2) *Indian Races.*—

(a) These may be divided into:—(1) Hindus (including Hindus, Sikhs, Aryas, Brahmos).  
(2) Muslims (excluding Zerbadis or Burma Muslims). These again may be divided into:  
(1) Born in Burma. (2) Born out of Burma.

With regard to Indians born in Burma, the proportion of male to female is natural.

There is very large difference between sexes of those born out of Burma amongst Hindus and Muslims. Following figures will make this difference clear:—

	Born in		Born out	
	Male.	Female.	Male.	Female.
Hindus	53,892	45,871	333,539	63,116
Muslims	109,382	108,664	146,200	17,572
	163,274	154,535	479,739	80,688

This difference between sexes is to be found amongst all Indians "Born out" of Burma.

Table XIII, page 208, Part II, 1921, Census Report, may be referred to for details of distribution in each division and district. Taking into account the Indian population born "in" and "out" of Burma.

	Men.	Women.	Total.
"In" Burma .. .. .	163,274	154,535	643,013
"Out" Burma .. .. .	479,739	80,688	235,223
	643,013	235,223	878,235

Men are three times the women.

	Indians.	
	Born in.	Born out.
Class V.—Table XX (p. 444). Trade Finance, Insurance. (Total supported) .. .. .	29,462	80,221
	or a total of 109,683	
Class VIII.—Profession and Liberal Arts .. .. .	5,448	7,649
Classes XI and XII.—Insufficiently discented occupation .. .. .	14,880	85,303
	49,790	173,173
	173,173	
Total .. .. .	222,963	

Out of 878,235  
222,963

555,272 come within the scope of the questionnaire or, say, approximately 1/4th of the Indian in Burma are not labourers and 3/4th are. But it is noticeable that those who do not come within the purview of the questionnaire are bringing their families to a larger extent than does labour and therefore the paucity of women in the labour class is larger than is apparent from the figures. This paucity of women becomes still more apparent when Age is taken into account. Table XIV, page 216 of Census Report of 1921 may be referred to.

Taking the marriageable age of men as 15 to 40 and of women from 12 and up, the paucity of women becomes still more apparent.

It becomes apparent that very large number of Indian labour consisting of married men leave their wives behind and unmarried men come to Burma; but even if they so desired there is paucity of unmarried women to get married to. The result is, as regards married men, a great disturbance of family life. Further moral degradation of both married and unmarried men results. Another serious matter is that lads between the age 12—15 are brought over in fair numbers and living as they do with men, nothing but degradation can result.

A further fact is that girls are brought over resulting in their degradation also.

The reasons for the families kept behind are:—(1) Nature of work. (2) A moving life in the country. (3) Bad housing and consequent large mortality. (4) Family land in the home land. (5) The large percentage of death amongst Indian women, particularly the Hindus, may also be a deterrent.

Reference.—Supplementary Annual Statement V. A., page 86 of Report on the Public Health Administration of Burma for the year 1928.

7. Industrial workers.—There are three distinct streams of unemployment, viz:—

(1) Temporary industrial unemployment.—Because of the general trade depression. This affects the Indian industrial labour.

(2) Displacement of skilled and unskilled workers. (a) Indigenous home and cottage industries.

Reasons.—Competition of imported articles displacing indigenous manufactured article. An example may be given of the spinning and weaving industry of Burma. According to the Census Report of 1901, there were 150,000 women employed which in 1911 dwindled down to 100,000 and in 1921 to 50,000 women.

Similarly, pottery and lacquer ware industries, etc., have greatly suffered from the competition by the foreign manufactured articles.

(b) Unemployment in Industries which are more or less permanent affected by modern machinery:—

Example.—(1) In the transport of men, formerly a large number of carriages drawn by ponies bred in Burma plied in Rangoon and in the districts. Electric Tramway followed by motor cars, motor taxis and motor buses have displaced the horse drawn carriage altogether practically all over Burma. (2) In the transport of goods, bullock carts and hand carts drawn by men have been

and are being rapidly displaced by motor vehicles both in Rangoon and in the districts. (3) Iron beams and girders are replacing timber very largely. Other instances of similar nature may be cited.

The three instances cited above mean displacement of the pony breeder, the driver, the coach or cart builder, the carpenter, the blacksmith and consequent reduction in local sale of timber, affecting the saw mill owner, the labourer of the mills, the tree feller, etc.

The question is what new avenue of work have been opened out to take up the unemployment thus created. In the West the evolution of motor took place gradually, and as the displacement of workers in transport took place, new avenues were opened out for employment of displaced labour by the increased production of steel and iron required for the manufacture of motors and in the advance that other industries made to supply the growing needs of the motor car manufacture, like the rubber industry.

In England, because there was a trade slump, the British Railways were induced to purchase steel sleepers instead of purchasing timber sleepers, some part of which at least would have gone from Burma. But although trade and industry in Burma are so depressed the Government of Burma will not agree to stop purchase of steel and iron beams in favour of Burmese timber.

In our mind, as every modern invention is introduced in Burma, so it will go on displacing labour from some field of work or another and those who, prior to it, were "skilled" labourers have to come down to the level of "unskilled" labourers. Grave consequences must follow. The Commission can well understand the nature of consequences which are bound to follow the continuous increase of large middle class unemployed and also a large and continuous displacement of "skilled" labour into the mass of unemployed unskilled labour.

The position that we envisage is that on one side owing to trade depression unemployment has been created in those spheres of labour which formerly could not complain of unemployment, mainly the Indian labour class. Economic pressure of competition of foreign goods on the indigenous industries and consequent unemployment is now felt. Insufficiency of income of agricultural labour makes it more and more incumbent on that labour to find other spheres of labour, particularly at a time when the market for labour itself is in a depressed condition.

In the meantime no new avenues of work are opened to the people of the country. Under the present Tariff and Exchange policy no new industries can be developed. Army, Navy, Shipping, Ship-building, etc., are sealed to us, as in India so in Burma.

(iii) *Possible method of alleviating and remedying distress.*—We suggest:—

\* \* \* \* \*

(2) Promotion of lower grades to higher grades to a much greater degree.

(3) Employment of men with local qualifications or, in the alternative closing down the institutions for such qualifications.

(4) Promotion of technical education and industrial education.

(5) Change of Tariff policy.

(6) Change of Exchange policy.

(7) Adoption of definite policy for encouragement of industries.

(8) Encouragement of indigenous industries by purchase of articles by Government in preference to foreign articles.

(9) Government should open up new agricultural lands and let them out to such agricultural workers as may desire to work them. Government should also finance such agricultural tenants.

(10) For those in the districts who want to take up industrial work to encourage such labourers to take up work in the district mills.

## II.—Staff Organization.

### 10. (a) European concerns.

Administrative staff and Heads of Departments are all mostly Europeans. Large firms generally get out European assistants on three to five years' agreements. These assistants gradually rise to positions and later may become partners of the firms. Indians, however old in service or in responsible work, never get a chance to rise beyond a certain limit. In the industrial concerns there is a clear discrimination in favour of Europeans and Anglo-Indians or Anglo-Burmans as against Burmans or Indians.

### (b) Burman, Indian, Chinese concerns.

They are generally smaller concerns and cannot afford to pay high salaries, and employ the best they can afford.

12. (i) There is no general system of recruitment of superior staff except in European firms as stated above, recruitment being generally done in Great Britain.

The Railways and large European concerns have systems of training supervising staff through the system of apprenticeship. Such apprentices reach certain grades and no further.

There is no method by which such men can pass higher examinations after practical experience of some years.

(ii) There is no facility for training and promotion of workmen in any concern that we know of.

14. *Time keeping, piece-work, contract and attendance registers.*

(ii) Wages paid by in—

Oil Fields to labourers by Company.

Dockyards, wages paid to contractors by Port Commissioners—contractors pay labour.

B. I. S. N., wages paid by contractors.

Scindia, wages paid by contractors.

15. We have already dealt with the maistry system under I. Contract system is not otherwise much availed of in factories. It is availed of in public works, roads and buildings, Quarries and mining.

### III.—Housing.

16. The problem of housing of labour has been receiving attention from time to time, and some steps have been taken to improve the condition. The problem, particularly in Rangoon, has assumed a serious position though schemes have been prepared from time to time yet nothing tangible has been done. Recent enquiries into the \**“Public Health of Rangoon”* and of the †*“effects of the Removal of Rent Control in Burma”* together with the annual Reports of the Health Officer of the Corporation give graphic account of conditions in Rangoon, but there is no connected account or statistics available on the question of housing of labour for the whole of the Province. We believe the problem is acute only in Rangoon.

(1) We would refer to the report on the Public Health of Rangoon, Vol. I, page 30, paras. 68, 69, 70, 71, 72 and 73.

(2) With regard to lodging houses, paragraphs 74, 75, 76 and 77.

(3) With regard to *“Proposed Remedies”*, paragraphs 78, 79, 80, 81, 82 and 83.

(4) *“Report on Housing Conditions in Rangoon undertaken by the Members of the Rangoon Social Service League”*, Vol. I, page 86, para 3.

(5) Memorandum submitted by Dr. K. R. Dalal, L.M. and S., D.T.M., D.P.H., Health Officer, Corporation of Rangoon, Vol. I, page 113, appendix of the above report particularly page 134, Housing accommodation.

(6) *“Report of the Committee appointed to enquire into the effects of the Removal of Rent Control in Rangoon”*, paras. 7 and 8.

(7) Minute of Dissent to above Report, page 29.

The estimate of the labour population in Rangoon is 100,000 according to the report on the Public Health of Rangoon and 72,000 according to Mr. Benninson's Report† of the enquiry into the standard and cost of living of the working classes in Rangoon. There is room for one being an over-estimate and the other an under-estimate, and about 85,000 would be workable basis. The figure of 72,000 labourers is made up as under: (page 13, Rent Enquiry Committee). For the lodging houses, according to Municipal Laws, 36 sq. ft. of floor space per person is calculated and in exceptional cases at 24 sq. ft., i.e., for a house 12½ ft. by 50 ft. 14 labourers would occupy the room at 36 sq. ft. Very often the maistry or the gang maistry engages a house of 12½ ft. by 50 ft., and large numbers—25 to 40—labourers are made to live in the room. They pay not less than Rs. 1-8 per head per month.

(i) *By Employers.*—Appendix C of the Rent Control Enquiry Committee on page 58 gives the details of certain large industries and public bodies which lodge, totally or partially, labour employed by them.

	<i>Private concerns.</i>
Total employed .. .. .	13,478
Lodged .. .. .	9,083
Not lodged .. .. .	4,395

\*Report on the Public Health of Rangoon, 1927.

†Report of the Committee appointed to enquire into the effects of the removal of Rent Control in Burma, July 1930.

‡Report of an Enquiry into the Standard and Cost of Living of the working classes in Rangoon by Mr. J. J. Bennison, B.A., I.C.S., Officer-in-Charge, Labour Statistics Bureau, Rangoon, 1928.

According to Municipal figures (page 12, Rent Enquiry Committee) 32,652 are lodged in Mill barracks altogether.

From the above it will be noted that about 5,000 have yet to be lodged by the private concerns. For these we press that immediate steps be taken to provide lodging.

Suggestion.—All employers of factory labour employing more than 100 men should be made to provide housing accommodation.

Outside of Rangoon.—Most of the factories give lodging to a smaller or larger extent to their labourers and staff.

(ii) By Government or other Public Agencies.—Refer to Appendix C, Rent Control Enquiry Committee; the following table states the position in Rangoon:—

	Government,	Port Com- missioners.	Corporation of Rangoon.	Burma Railways.
Total employed .. ..	143	1,465	5,236	781
Lodged .. ..	142	755	1,243	536
Not lodged .. ..	..	710	3,993	245

We submit that Appendix C does not contain the full list of those employed by Government or the Burma Railways and therefore these figures are only partially correct.

Suggestions.—All public bodies and Government must give lodging to their workers.

(iii) By Private Landlords.—According to the Municipal figures (Reference Rent Enquiry Committee, page 12) registered lodging houses provide for 75,777 persons.

17. There is no facility for acquisition of land for workers houses. No attention has been paid to this side of the question. Development Trust was instituted with the purpose of developing areas around Rangoon proper. It has done so at such an exorbitant cost that instead of the land becoming cheaper, prices have gone up and the Development Trust raised its rents higher than any landlord in Burma by 100 per cent. and more in some quarters.

When the Trust was operating, lands which could have been definitely used for such purpose as above, were not so conserved. The only thought paid to this subject is in part II, page 99, in the report on housing condition in Rangoon undertaken by the members of the Rangoon Social Service League to which Professor H. S. Jevons and other equally well known persons are signatories and their report deserves consideration. This report is a part of evidence in the Report on the Public Health of Rangoon.

18. *Nature of accommodation provided in each class.*—(i) and (ii). We take leave to deal with all these three points together. All the barracks in the town of Rangoon or within the limits of the Corporation have to be according to the Building Bye Laws of the Municipal Corporation of Rangoon. They are built in different styles and with different materials. Those which are of corrugated sheets and/or with ceilings of corrugated sheets are extremely hot in the hot weather. Thatch roof, though humbler and less costly, is cooler. But the workers have to put up with what they are given. There are more or less in all cases complaints about sufficiency of accommodation for kitchen. There is also generally complaint of latrines. They may be sufficient and passable from the Municipal point of view, but generally they are far off from the barracks and so in case of sickness and during the monsoon it is difficult to reach them. The greatest and most serious complaint is that family quarters are not at all provided.

Lodging Houses.—As regards accommodation of labour in lodging houses we refer to Mr. Bennis's Report on the working classes of Rangoon, page 90, para. 239.

He says "It is not unusual to find a tenement room 12½ ft. by 40 ft. occupied by as many as 40 to 50 people". "In some rooms there are two sets of tenants one set occupying it during the day and the other during the night. Families are often found in these lodging houses, gunny-bag partitions being erected to secure a certain amount of privacy". We may here remark that the same system is followed by families even in the barracks of private employers and in Government and public bodies.

Reference.—Report on the Public Health Enquiry Committee, page 114.

Suggestion.—We only desire in this respect a humane treatment for this unfortunate class of humanity on which albeit rests perhaps the foundation of the future of this city and this

province. We ask that a housing scheme for labourers should be started at the earliest possible opportunity.

**Surroundings of Barracks.**—With the exception of Rangoon, the Rice Mills and Saw Mills areas during the monsoon are in a very water sodden condition. In many Mills part of the factory area is practically under water. The land under the barracks (if raised) and surrounding areas are in a very water laden condition. It is natural that labour under such circumstances should greatly suffer from lung diseases and other ailments arising from such conditions.

**Suggestion.**—It is suggested that land under the barracks and surrounding the barracks should be raised to an extent which would enable water to drain off. Roadways to latrines should be raised so that labourers may not have to walk through water.

(iii) *Provisions made for lighting, conservancy and water supply.*—Reference.—Page 67, Public Health Committee Report.

**Lodging houses in Rangoon.**—Under circumstances described in reply to the previous question it will be noted that all arrangements are based on the basis of 14 persons living in a room of 12½ ft. by 40 ft. where twice and thrice the number are lodged, the adequacy or the contrary of conveniences may well be imagined rather than described.

**Houses provided by employers, Government or Public Agencies in Rangoon.**—In areas where water supply and electricity is laid on, these facilities are available.

**Outside areas.**—In some barracks, water is given from tube wells or wells or rivers. No special arrangement is made regarding lighting. This is also the condition outside Rangoon in the districts.

**Conservancy.**—Only in areas where sewerage is laid this is made available. Outside the sewered area in Rangoon town, and in districts the latrine accommodation though not insufficient is often inefficient. The distance of latrine from the barracks is a matter of universal complaint.

**Suggestion.—Lighting.**—In all labour barracks in the areas in Rangoon or outside where electric lighting is laid on and in all factories where electric lighting is installed, electric lighting should be installed in barracks.

**Conservancy.**—In areas where sewer system does not prevail, latrines of a better type should be made. Several types of arrangements are shown every year at the Health Exhibition, but nowhere are they used. Latrines should be as close to barracks as possible, keeping in view sanitary conditions. A roadway should always be provided which should not be under water during the monsoon. This roadway should be lighted as also the latrine at employers' expense. Latrines should be cleaned four times a day.

**Reference.**—Item No. VII, page. 71, Public Health Committee Report "Model coolie barracks is an urgent necessity....." (written statement of the Honorary Secretary, Burma Provincial Medical Service Association).

**Reference.**—Para 7, page 102, Public Health Committee. Statement by Burma Indian Chamber of Commerce.

**Reference.**—Pages 134, 135.

19. We are not aware of a single instance where labour has not utilized available accommodation.

If there is any such case we presume to say that the accommodation may not have been used because of its inacceptability or through some reason connected with the management.

20. *Rent rates in various classes.*—Reference. (1) "Enquiry into the standard and cost of living of the working classes in Rangoon."

Page 23, para 69	..	..	..	..	..	Burmese.
Page 31, para 85	..	..	..	..	..	Indian.

Statistical tables.

(2) "Report of the Committee appointed to enquire into the effects of the Removal of Rent Control in Rangoon."

We attach herewith a consolidated table from rent figures quoted by Mr. Bennison in his Report. We however must clearly say that in our opinion these figures are not all reliable, if taken for each class. But on the average we agree that for the classes we have mentioned who are living in rental houses, an average of Rs. 1-8-0 per month would be a fair rent.

In our opinion rent is paid over 10 per cent. of the actual earnings of the labourer in Rangoon.

Class.	Monthly income.	Rent.		
		Rs.	A.	P.
Coal carriers .. .. .	25 2 11	0	12	10
Paddy carriers .. .. .	24 8 1	1	4	10
Handcart pullers .. .. .	43 1 2	2	5	3
Skilled factory workers .. .. .	36 6 5	1	6	10
Rice bag carriers .. .. .	37 1 11	0	15	10
Stevedore and Wharf coolies .. .. .	32 6 4	2	1	5
Rickshaw pullers .. .. .	28 2 4	1	13	9
Corporation coolies .. .. .	25 10 2	1	11	9
Cargo boatmen .. .. .	25 3 2	1	7	4
Paddy carriers .. .. .	24 14 0	0	13	1
Unskilled factory workers .. .. .	20 9 2	1	0	5
Skilled factory workers.. .. .	39 5 8	1	12	3
Tramway workers .. .. .	27 14 4	1	11	7
Unskilled factory workers .. .. .	23 9 3	0	14	5
Durwans and peons .. .. .	25 0 8	1	8	4
Gharry wallahs .. .. .	24 15 8	1	13	0
Unskilled factory workers .. .. .	24 6 1	1	7	4
Tindals .. .. .	45 10 2	1	10	10
Firemen .. .. .	28 14 11	1	5	9
Oilmen .. .. .	26 3 10	1	4	7

22. The moral effect on workers of industrial housing conditions of the present have been thoroughly bad both as regards lodging houses and barracks. Married couple with just a piece of gunny bag or other rough curtain hung over a bed, have to sleep in the same room with rows of males married but without their wives, or non-married males lying in all directions. Small boys constitute a good proportion of occupiers. The physical health of the lads must necessarily suffer; their mental and moral health must also suffer. Prostitution and venereal disease are rampant. Drink and drug evil must necessarily have a strong hold in such condition of life. No effort can change the moral atmosphere of environments of this nature. Provision of better housing accommodation and facility of keeping a family are the only cures for the evil.

#### IV.—Health.

There are no special figures available with regard to workers. The statistics given below are therefore those of the whole population.

Reference.—Public Health Report, 1927.

(i) *Figures of Mortality per 1,000.*

Table VII.

Provincial.	Total.	Rural.	Urban.
Quinquennial mean .. .. .	19.55	17.38	36.21
	20.86	18.85	36.52
	Urban.	<i>Mean of previous 5 years.</i>	
Rangoon Town .. .. .	31.41	35.05	
Mandalay .. .. .	41.16	46.95	
Moulmein .. .. .	26.17	30.64	
Bassein .. .. .	41.60	39.00	
Prome .. .. .	49.45	52.04	
Yenangyaung .. .. .	39.94	49.52	
Pegu .. .. .	42.46	48.15	
Toungoo .. .. .	34.55	32.15	
Myingyan .. .. .	40.99	38.05	

The above are the most important industrial towns.

Yenangyaung is the Oil centre. Myingyan Cotton centre. The other towns have rice and timber and seed oil mills.

Taking 350,000 as the Indian labour in Burma, about 30,000 die every year or say 80 per 1,000 of Indian labour in Burma.

Reference to Supplementary Annual Statement VA, page 86, Report on the Public Health Administration of Burma, 1928, gives some interesting information.

We would point out the large rate of death of Indians and of Indian women and the death rate of Hindu women in special. We would venture to say that this is an indication that housing has something to do with this.

In Rangoon.—Public Health Committee Report, para 11. Death rate is 35·81 in 1926.

Reference.—Statement No. 9. Statement of Deaths by Registration Circle in the City of Rangoon for the year 1925, page 151, Public Health Report. (Table given in full.)

(ii) Reference.—Report on the Public Health Administration, 1927.

Para. 8. "Birth rate and death rate lower than those of any other Provinces."

"Infantile mortality 198·05, second highest."

Para 10, page 6. "The low birth rates of a number of towns, particularly those of Lower Burma, are due to a disparity of sexes resulting from a floating population of adventitious male labour."

Reference.—Annual Statement, No. VI (a) Provincial Birth and Mortality Infantile Statistics.

Infantile Mortality. Reference.—Report on the Public Health Administration, para. 14. Statements IV and IV (a).

In Rangoon town, birth and death registration is under the Rangoon Corporation. There are birth registration depots. It is the duty of the parents to register birth. If any birth is found not to have been registered the parent is liable to be fined. There are inspectors of Health Department who are supposed to check registration. With regard to other towns and districts, paragraphs 6, 7 and 10, Report on the Public Health administration may be referred to. It is evident that systems prevailing are not uniformly satisfactory.

30. *Sickness Insurance.*—(iii) (a) *Difficulties arising from non-acceptability of Western Medicine and paucity of Medical Men.*—Schools and Colleges of medicine and surgery teaching indigenous medical science and homeopathic system should be encouraged by Government. When the Boards of such schools or colleges are formed of well known indigenous practitioners the schools and colleges and their diplomas and degrees should be recognized. (b) *Medical men passing out from such institutions should be subsidised to attain a minimum income of Rs. 100 per month. The scale of their fees should be fixed. Bills charged should be registered and inspected to see that the people are not fleeced.*

As regards sickness insurance. Medical examination by such men should be accepted as also treated by them.

23. (iii) *Working Conditions.*—At work places. Generally satisfactory.

(iv) *Dietary.*—Reference paragraph 47 of Report by Mr. J. J. Bennisson, I.C.S.

(v) *Physique.*—Good.

(vi) *Effects of disturbance of sex ratio in industrial cities.*—Very great as pointed out in answer to question No 22.

(vii) *Relation between Housing and Mortality.*—We are of opinion there is a close relation in industrial labour between housing and mortality in Rangoon. Corporation of Rangoon Health Reports and Health Committees Reports may be consulted.

24. (i) Only four firms provide medical facilities.

(ii) In Rangoon. There is one Government Hospital, but Indian labour does not go there to a very large extent.

In other centres.—Government has hospitals and dispensaries, but these are insufficient each having to deal with very large areas and large population.

See Public Health Report and Report on Hospitals and Dispensaries.

Reference.—Statement B, page 40.

(iii) *Rangoon.* There is the Rama Krishna Mission Hospital in Rangoon which has the largest number of labour patients treated yearly. It is carried on by public funds supported by Government and Rangoon Corporation. The Rangoon Corporation has dispensaries which are generally used by poor class of people. All these facilities are not sufficient for Rangoon.

(iv) *Maternity shelters* are provided by Infantile Welfare Society in which there are women doctors. Dufferin Hospital is also a hospital for women.

Rangoon Corporation has lady doctors as Inspectors to examine houses, schools and give general advice to women. Midwives are trained but their fees and paucity in number does not enable the labouring classes to have the advantage of their services except in maternity shelters. Unqualified dais are generally dying out.

25. (i) Reference.—Hospitals and Dispensaries Report for 1926-28, paragraphs 20, 21 and 22.

(ii) By women.—Refer above report, Statement " E ", 1926-28, pages 68 and 69.

26. (i) Corporation and Municipal rules enforce sufficiency of latrines except in tenement houses. (ii) Drinking water.—In Rangoon and generally in Burma ample supply of water is a difficulty. But, generally speaking both, at work and at home, water is supplied either through pipes or from wells or rivers. In many upcountry towns water is bad. Refer to Public Health Report. Outside of Rangoon better attention needs to be paid to the sterilization of water.

(iii) Bathing and washing.—Generally speaking it is sufficient where water is laid on. Outside of Rangoon in many places rivers are used for this purpose.

27. (i) There is a Provincial Public Health Board but it does not concern itself with labour requirements.

(ii) Nil so far as we know.

(iii) In Municipal towns, inspection of health condition is seen to by the Municipalities. Otherwise by the Chief Inspector of Factories. Greater powers are necessary for officers to enforce that not only the houses should be of a sanitary nature but also that the surroundings should be sanitary.

29. (i) Prevalence of Industrial Disease.—None that we know of.

(ii) Prevalence of Cholera, Malaria, Hookworm and other Tropical Diseases.—Reference.—Statement C, pages 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64 and 65.

Infectious Diseases.—Statement D, pages 66 and 67 of the Triennial Report on the Hospital and Dispensaries in Burma for the year 1926-28.

Reference.—Graph at the end of Public Health Committee Report.

In Rangoon—Tuberculosis and Respiratory diseases.—Reference Paragraphs 15, 16, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 93 and 126, Public Health Committee Report.

Page 74, Public Health Committee Report.

Statement No. 5, page 148, Public Health Committee Report.

Statement No. 12, Public Health Committee Report.

Diarrhoea and Dysentery.—Paragraph 18. Statement No. 8, page 150 Public Health Committee Report. 14.59 per 1,000 in 30.30 sq. miles.

Small-pox.—Paragraphs 100, 101, 102 Public Health Committee Report. Statement No. 2, paragraph 146, 147 Public Health Committee Report. Statement No. 4 Public Health Committee Report.

Hookworm.—Paragraph 103 Public Health Committee Report.

Fevers.—Paragraphs 104, 105 Public Health Committee Report.

Plague.—Statement 1, pages 142, 143 Public Health Committee Report.

Statement 3, page 148 Public Health Committee Report.

Cholera.—Statement 2, pages 144, 145 Public Health Committee Report.

Statement 3, page 148 Public Health Committee Report.

Extract from written statement of Lieutenant-Colonel R. Kelsall, page 66, Public Health Committee Report.

Tuberculosis—

Reference. Memorandum submitted by Dr. K. R. Dalal, L.M. & S., D.T.M., D.P.H., Health Officer, Corporation of Rangoon, Appendix D, page 119, Public Health Enquiry Report.

Diarrhoea and Dysentery.—Pages 120, 121, 122, 123 and 131.

## V.—Welfare.

32. (i) In the case of some companies playgrounds and clubs have been provided but these are for the staff and particularly so for European and Anglo-Indian staff. Hospital is provided by the B. O. C.

33. *Employment of Welfare Officers and Workers.*—Nil.

34. *Other Welfare activities.*—Nil.

36. In some European concerns, like the B.O. C., attempt has been made to provide some facilities. But looking to the large labour force, it is insufficient, particularly for Burmese and Indian labourers' children.

38. Co-operation is very desirable and perhaps is the one way of making labour self-reliant.

It is possible however only for this to be started in the labour of the same type of industry and lodged together or in a mass of labour even employed by different industries, but lodged together or in different areas in batches. In industries like that of the Burmah Oil Co., Limited,

Indo-Burma Petroleum Co., Limited, British Burma Petroleum Co., Limited and other Oil Companies, The Burma Mines, The Bombay Burma Corporation, The Railways, Electric Tramway and Supply Co., Steel-Brothers Saw Mills and some Rice Mills, Adamjee Hajee Dawood's Match Factory, labour, though migratory to some extent, is still fairly permanent and is lodged by the concerns in fairly compact bodies. The system of co-operation has fairly good chance of success. Three things however militate against the movement, not necessarily jointly in each concern; these are—(1) the fear of the employers of the effect of a co-operative movement amongst labourers through the recognition of co-operative strength by the labouring classes; (2) The system of maistries where employed by concerns also militates, in fact makes it impossible for a real co-operative movement amongst the labour under him, or amongst labour jointly under several maistries. The reason is that under the present system labour is dependent, and kept dependent, on the maistry who is the centre of that group of labour. Co-operative system in the sense of cooking all the food for a group is in force to a certain extent where the labour is lodged by the maistry, but the payment for the food is made to the maistry and not a central organisation of that group. The maintenance of a co-operative store for a group or groups becomes impossible as where possible the maistries or contractors open shops or give supplies and thus make a further profit on stores supplied. (3) The caste system amongst Indians, it is said, comes in the way to some extent against co-operation, but it seems to us that this would not be a hindrance in putting up co-operative stores for food or other necessities of life, nor would the larger question of religion come in its way.

**VI.—Education.**

40. We have to say that there is no particular "Industrial Area" as such in Burma. We will therefore give general information with regard to general education.

(i) *Of children not in employment.* Reference, Hartog Committee Report—  
*Table XX, Chapter IV Hartog Committee Report.*

Percentage of population of school-going age who are receiving primary instruction—  
 Boys. Girls.

	1917	1922	1927	1917	1922	1927
Burma .. ..	28.2	20.9	23	14.0	12.3	18.4

There are no areas under compulsion.

In Rangoon Circle there are 65 Public and Private schools. Public schools being those which are aided by Government or by Education Boards. The total attendance being 7,344. The Public schools numbered 52 with attendance of 6,644 and Private schools 15 with 700 pupils.

*Tamils and Telugus.*—There were 10 Anglo-Vernacular schools with 3,572 pupils and 34 Vernacular schools, with 2,551 pupils. There were eight private schools with 551 pupils. We regret we cannot give closer information.

(ii) *Of Children employed in factories.*—We understand the Burma Oil Co., Limited have some such schools.

(iii) *Of Adults.*—We understand that no Government or private industrial agency has any school for the education of their workmen. There were four private night schools and twenty recognised night schools. There are two or three large and well managed schools, particularly the Khademul Islam night school. Information is not available as to how many cater for Tamil and Telugu or Oriya communities. There is no serious movement with regard to introduction of compulsory education even in defined areas. So long as this is not done—and it is possible to have compulsory education in defined areas in Rangoon—so long educationally the masses must remain in a very backward stage.

41. Government has opened the following :—

(1) Training School at Amarapura. (2) Pottery and Works at Insein. (3) Lacquerware Technical Institute for training of Civil Engineers and Mechanical Engineers. (4) Rangoon University Engineering College.

42. Education has generally not so permeated the labour class as to have any marked effect on standard of living or efficiency of work. Even if education had permeated the masses, the system of recruitment and lodging and general condition of living would prevent any advantageous effect on standard of living or efficiency of workers. Expenditure on intoxicants or narcotics and doctors' fees for venereal diseases raises the *s. d.* value of standard of living but reduces efficiency of workers; however those who come into touch with town and Industrial life, their requirements grow, and they have the desire to live in a better manner; but the system of lodging and general conditions, with no opportunity for getting away from the usual atmosphere in which they live and work, prevent expression of latent desire. It is not uncommon for labourers to rise gradually to a gang maistry or maistry; and as he rises one clearly sees the difference in his dress, and his demeanour; and in his house, his furniture, etc., show that the latent desires are given expression to in practice. To think, as so many do, that a coolie is a coolie whether he is money or not, is not so. He has the same capacity to rise, and in rising, maintains his dignity as

any other person of any other race. It has been noticed that men who have received education are more self-reliant and understand their responsibilities. In all Engineering Colleges and Schools and Technical Institutes one of the subjects of study should be problems of labour, methods used in dealing with them in other countries, particularly with regard to Health, and welfare work. A test in first aid should also be required.

**VII.—Safety.**

43. Saw Mills circular saws should all have protecting guards on them. More guarding of all belting in all factories is necessary. Serious offences against Boiler Acts causing injury to labourers are treated too lightly. All factories with over 30 men working in it should have qualified Engineer in charge of the whole machinery. At present the Tindal, who is really in charge of the engine, has to look after the engine and also after all the machinery, except in large concerns.

44. Reference. *Report of Inspector of Factories.*—Appendix B.

48. In most of the factories some medicines are kept. But the knowledge of "First Aid" is most lacking. First Aid as is understood is not known by either the proprietors or the tindals in the mills as a rule. Medical relief is even less obtainable by the labourers except in some few large firms. In concerns where doctors pay visits or remain on the premises, labourers receive least attention.

49. We would like to see much greater stringency and enforcement of regulations. There is a deplorable lack of sympathetic understanding on the part of officers, who are not primarily employed in factory inspection. Factory owners being rich people generally with great deal of influence seem to be able to defy regulations. This is proved by the fact that even returns for the purpose of the Workmen's Compensation Act are not submitted properly, and officers in the districts do not take steps against the defaulters. It can be well understood how the factory owners then would be able to get over regulations, which are enforceable by district officers.

**VIII.—Workmen's Compensation.**

51. *Workmen's compensation Act.* (i) Extent of use.—This is not understood as yet, and full advantage is not taken of it. It should be translated in all languages and sold at nominal prices.

52. Suggestions.—We suggest that the following trades be brought under the Workmen's Compensation Act. (1) Inland Vessels of all types: (worked with mechanical powers and with out mechanical power, but excluding sampans, and vessels in which there are less than two persons.) Our remarks under Factories Act apply to this also. Further we have to add that a number of fatal accidents (or otherwise) occur in this trade which employs a large number of workmen. There is no justification for keeping workers out of the benefit of the Act.

(2) Lime Kiln.—In the preparation of lime kiln a good deal of heat is generated and workers do suffer therefrom. We therefore suggest that it is a suitable trade to be brought under the Compensation of Workmen's Act.

(3) (a) P. W. D. and Railways.—In the localities where new roads are opened out, and new rail track laid, it is generally very unhealthy, and a very large number of workers suffer from malaria, dysentery, etc., the water supply and housing conditions are generally very bad. It does not seem to us therefore that there is any difference in a worker getting ill in a known locality, and in a trade which may create Industrial disease. We therefore strongly urge, that in these trades, workers should receive compensation for illness contracted during the period of work in the locality.

Group III. Persons (other than labourers) employed in maintenance of roads and bridges.

Workers and Dependants.	Workers.	
	Males.	Females.
4,606	1,703	211

Labourers associated with Group III.

Workers and Dependants.	Workers.	
	Males.	Females.
50,210	26,247	6,023

(5) P. W. D. and Railways (Roads and Rail Road Construction).—In these the danger of accidents is also great, and therefore we press that these be brought under the Compensation Act.

(6) Timber Extraction from Forests.—Most of the camps in the forest are malarious; water supply in most places is unsatisfactory; housing is also unsatisfactory. This trade is dangerous and many cases of sickness and accidents take place, but the workers get no compensation.

(7) Brick Fields.—This is an industry of considerable importance in Rangoon, and a large number of workers are employed therein. Conditions are unhealthy, and a number of accidents happen.

Group 56.

Workers and Dependants.

12,629.

Workers.

Males.  
6,517

Females.  
1,872

(7) Motor Drivers, Bus Drivers, Lorry Drivers (of private cars and for hire).—This occupation is extending rapidly in Burma. There are about 20,000 motor cars. Accidents are many.

(8) Liftmen.—This is an occupation in which comparatively few men are engaged, but accidents do happen.

(9) Workers on ships are sometimes gassed going down the holds of the ships, owing to special types of material brought as cargo. Some have actually died. We understand Compensation has been paid.

(10) Doubtful Points.—We are in doubt whether, (a) Chapter I. "n", labourers, like those employed by day in wharves and docks or on Railways for loading or unloading of goods come under the Act. If they do not then we would most strongly press for their inclusion in the Act.

53. *Conditions Governing grant of compensation.*—(ii) The Workmen's Compensation Act 1923 (as modified up to 1st July, 1929). Section 3 (1) b (ii) and (iii).

If any of the Acts are performed as necessary to the carrying out of the usual work, owing to negligence or any act of the employer, and this be proved by the workman, the provision should not apply.

Reasons.—Lubrication of machinery, when the machinery is in action. Very often the employers do not shut down their machinery, working continuously for twelve hours and over. Though notice may be put up not to lubricate the machinery during action, lubrication becomes necessary, and shafts and machines are oiled whilst in action to the knowledge of the employer.

Section 10.—In Burma the limitation of six months may be extended with advantage as very large number of industrial labour is at present from India, and consequently mostly the dependants are in India. Correspondence between the employee and the Insurance Company also creates a great delay.

Section 30 (1).—First proviso.—No appeal is permissible unless a substantial question of law is involved in the appeal. We would point out that even in common cases, in Civil Court, appeal is permitted on point of facts as well as point of law. We submit that it is possible for an error in appreciating facts on the part of the Commissioner. We would therefore ask that an appeal to the High Court may be made possible on point of Law, as well as facts.

## IX.—Hours.

### Factories.

55. Generally there is not much complaint of hours worked more than 60 hours per week except in some special classes.

61. With regard to this there is a great deal of complaint about the mills in the district. During the busy season mills are continuously worked for many days without a weekly holiday. We suggest that the Rice Mills should be brought under the strict rule of 60 hours a week, and also for weekly holidays. Generally in other factories rules are observed. We do not press for a reduction of hours, but we do press for much greater supervision; and stringency for making the factories observe the present rules. Fresh improvements by rules on paper serve us little. We would point out that there are no statistics available of the hours worked by the factories, and the number of days of rest given by them.

Suggestions.—Daily muster of workmen showing hours worked for each worker should be maintained.

62. Rice Mills.—Hours of work.—The Rice Mills have been exempted from the ten hours day rule, provided they do not work more than 60 hours a week. In Rangoon the mills stick to the rules generally except that in the busy season they do drive their men hard occasionally. But in the districts we are informed that the mills do not stick to the 60 hours week, and continue for long stretches weekly.

## X.—Special Questions Relating to Women, Young Adults and Children.

Factories.—The industries in which women are employed in Burma are :—(1) Oil Refineries, (2) Match Factories for filling boxes, making up boxes and pasting labels and on box making and labelling machines, (3) Cotton ginning for cleaning cotton. All these are generally Burmese women.

Nos. 1 and 2 give regular work. No. 3 is seasonal. (4) Women are employed in Rice Mills, generally for spreading boiled rice. These are generally Indian women.

(82) *Admission of Infants to Factories.*—In 2, 3 and 4 children are permitted. Rules are not strictly observed in 2.

83. There does not seem to be any occasion to change the present rules.

84. Unless compulsory education is introduced no change is needed.

86. In the workshop and engineering works facilities are given for apprenticeship to a few but those selected are not from the labour but middle educated classes.

## XII.—Wages.

96. (i) We have given in tabulated form the incomes of labourers in some of the different industries as stated in the Report on the Enquiry into the Standard and Cost of Living of the Working Classes in Rangoon by Mr. J. J. Bennison, B. A., I.C.S., under Housing. We have to say that those incomes are not correct, because evidently the income per month has been calculated on the daily wage. But we have to say that labourers working in Rice Mills, paddy carriers and rice bag carriers get regular work during a certain number of months in a year, and erratic working for a few months, and no work at all for some months. The working would depend on individual Mills, but generally from January to April, the work is regular; from May to August irregular and from September to December most of the Mills are closed down.

As regards coal and salt carriers, stevedore labourers, they get 10 days average work in the month; the wharf labourers get about 20 days work in the month. The Rice Mill labour goes out to seek some agricultural or outside work when the Mill is closed down. What their earnings would be it is impossible to calculate. The shipping labourers, when not required to load or unload ships, go out into the town to get whatever work they can pick up. It is impossible to say what such earnings would be.

In each Industry even of the same type there is a very great diversity in the payment of workers of the same type of work—particularly so in factories. We append a table compiled from the annual Reports on the Working of the Indian Factories Act in Burma. This will clearly prove our point.

We are of opinion that the system prevailing in Burma is defective, and in the absence of Trade Organisations Employers take great deal of advantage of the workers.

98. It is almost impossible to say what amounts the Tamil, Telugu and Oriyan labour send to their villages. But the report of Mr. J. J. Bennison, in which figures of earnings and expenditure are given, has given a very false impression that the earnings of the labourer is fabulous. Under question (96) we have already shown to what extent these figures require correction. For instance the stevedore labour now gets Rs. 1-12-0 per day. We state that the average working for the year is not more than ten days in the month, or that that labour does not earn more than Rs. 17-8-0 per month of ten days from working as a shipping labourer. He may earn another Rs. 10 from other sources of labour, making in all Rs. 27-8-0 whilst Mr. Bennison puts it down to Rs. 32-6-4 per month at the previous rate of Rs. 1-8-0 per day and on this basis he makes it out that he sends out Rs. 7-2-8 or 22-1 per cent. of his income. (Reference Table XXVII, page 157.) This we say is fallacious and gives a very inflated idea of the labourer's earnings. We may again give an example of the rice bag carrier. (Reference Table XXVI, page 156.) His income is taken as Rs. 37-3-11 per month. But the months he receives no work are not taken into account. Again, though Mr. Bennison says that a good many deductions take place before the labourer gets his wages, yet these deductions do not find place on the expenditure side. Therefore it is clear that the labourer could not save Rs. 11-3-1 or 30-2 per cent. of his earnings per month to be able to send to his village in India.

Taking all these factors into consideration we are of opinion that Rs. 50 to Rs. 75 per year would be the most he could save per year. As regards the Hindustanis, we would place the amount of his savings (except Durwans employed in Rice Mills, whose pickings it is not possible to calculate) would also be sending about Rs. 50 to Rs. 75 per year.

The Chittagonian labour, except the Tindals, also range about Rs. 55 to Rs. 75 per year.

96. Those employed as unskilled labour in factories would get on an average about Rs. 22-8-0 per month.

105. For the above reasons, and further that the statement is made in some quarters that Indian labour accepts a wage uneconomical to the Burmese workers, we are strongly of opinion that it would be in the best interest of workers and employers if a *minimum wage board* were to be established in Burma.

Suggestions.—In Rice Mills very often the work is commenced late in the day—and ten hours are counted from the time the work is begun. For instance, if work is begun at 12 noon, ten hours would be counted to 10 p.m. We therefore suggest that for permanent staff—

(1) Time suitable to each factory be fixed and (2) The day wages should be counted to 6 p.m. and after that wages at the rate of overtime be paid.

106. *Deductions.*—This has already been stated under Recruitment. Fines are imposed in some concerns. From enquiries made these do not seem to be normal but information is

not fully available, as workers seem to be afraid even to give information. The fines in the Government Press are extraordinarily many. This was one of the reasons for the Government press workers going on strike.

(iv) Unless the full extent of fining is known, we are reluctant to advise legislation. But the case of the Government Press seems to show that either rules should be changed, or some sort of legislation would be necessary to stop such continuous fining.

108. It seems that considerable number of labourers are in constant state of indebtedness to maistries or sub-maistries as stated under "Recruitment". Indebtedness arises also out of non-receipt of wages monthly.

109. No bonus is paid to factory labour, except paddy carriers in Rice Mills. Neither is there any system of profit sharing.

110. In some few large concerns there is a system of leave, and also in the Port Commissioners. But there is a great deal of complaint made with regard to these rules not being followed. In most cases leave is only granted on medical certificate and great deal of manipulation follows. We would strongly urge leave rules should be so made that a labourer, skilled or unskilled, or persons on the staff be enabled to obtain leave without medical certificates. As regards labour, if a certain number of months were granted every three years, it would be more permanent and it would be to the advantage of the employer.

### XIII.—Industrial efficiency of workers.

113. We believe that efficiency of two labours can only be compared if they are given equal conditions of management, machinery, conditions of work and treatment, wages, hours of work, conditions of living, education, and climatic conditions. We are of opinion that hardly any province or any country has used its labour in a more callous manner than has been the case in Rangoon. Yet the efficiency of the shipping labour is good. The paddy carriers and bag stitching labour is satisfactory. The wharf labour is good. The labour working in timber yard is intelligent and industrious.

The Oriya labour is well known for earth work; the Pathan labour for stone blasting and quarrying; the Hindustani as a Durwan for his honesty. Each provincial labour has secured for itself a particular type of work and is represented in Burma. Physically built light, it is still strong and wiry, with the capacity to fit itself in almost any condition of work. The record of Indian labour in Burma as in Kenya, is a record of which any labour may well be proud of. It has opened the Railways and the Forests, the Telegraph and the Post; it has opened the jungles and turned it into fine agricultural lands; it has navigated rivers uncharted. In fact on every side one sees the work of Indian labour. On every side, in every work, the foundation is built on the bones of Indian labour. Thousands and thousands have died, and yet the work has been carried on to completion.

In the factories it has adapted itself to all conditions which arise, particularly in the case of nascent industries. It has advanced with the advancing conditions of machines. And yet, when the condition in which it lives, the food that it eats, are taken into account, the wonder is that it has achieved what it has achieved. We believe that the very fact that Indian labour has been a migratory labour has helped Burma. The labourer after strenuous work goes back home; a fresh labourer replaces a tired one; and so the strength of labour even under the present conditions has been kept up. Had the labour been non-migratory it could never have kept up its vigour under these circumstances. We are bound to say that Indian labour has worked on a good standard.

115. (i) The main industry of rice milling is not affected, because no change in working hours has been made. In the other industries no appreciable difference is apparent at present. We have mentioned before that owing to the influence of factory owners they can break the rules freely. In rice mills, particularly during the busy season, weekly holiday is often not given.

(iii) Expenditure on health, sanitation and housing may not increase the production in rice, saw, oil and cotton ginning mills because of their machinery and system of working. But it would insure workmen remaining in Burma longer with better health and thereby give the industries men accustomed to work on certain types of machines who would not have to be changed frequently on the ground of ill health and discontent.

(ix) We believe that the conditions in which labour is lodged and its environments without any relief in the daily drudgery of work without any family life, are conditions best fitted to create alcoholism and drug habits. The constitution, worked to its utmost physical capacity and revived temporarily by the use of alcohol or physical exhaustion soothed by the use of drugs, must give way. Weakened in this dual manner it is no wonder that a very large number of labourers fall an easy prey to disease and death. In time these conditions tell on the constitution and the vigour of the labourer decreases until he himself leaves the country either homewards or heavenwards.

According to the League of Nations opium sold for medicinal purposes should be the medicated opium. But in the Delta and in Akyab and in Mergui and Tavoy where opium is sold

on the ground of Malaria, the usual opium is sold. We would give a quotation from the written statement of Dr. Dalal, Health Officer of the Corporation of Rangoon, submitted to the Public Health Enquiry Committee. Reference para. 6, pages 114 and 115.

Under such circumstances and knowing the circumstances of labour intimately we can say with knowledge that the capacity of workers is affected very much adversely and state that if the Honourable Commission would recommend the stoppage of this evil, the Commission will have conferred a boon on labour which would be remembered ever after. No reform is more required than with reference to alcoholism and drugs. The shops are open from morning till night.

116. (1) Support of the Government to industries and purchase of their articles, leading to a margin of profit, to enable industries to increase wages and doing all that which is done for labour in America and other large industrial countries. (2) Good homes to live in. (3) An increase of wage sufficient to enable a change of their mode of living which would create a self-respect for themselves. (4) To create some interest in their life except that of earning an amount sufficient to eke out an existence. (5) Recognition of good work by promotion to higher grades and better amenities than given to workers in factories at present. (6) A mixing of the higher officers with the labourers on a friendly footing. (7) Creation of a taste for healthy recreation wherever possible. (8) A direct heart interest in the well-being of workers by officers. (9) Health lectures whenever possible on the evils of drink and giving every help to health workers or temperance workers to use all legal means to wean the workers from habit of drink and narcotics even through peaceful picketing. (10) By introducing a system whenever possible of piece work with an increasing graded bonus system based on production. (11) Competition of workers of a department and prizes for same. (12) Appreciation of good work, good attendance and good conduct.

#### XIV.—Trade Combinations.

117. (i) Employers. European Chamber of Commerce, Burmese Chamber of Commerce, Indian Chamber of Commerce, Chinese Chamber of Commerce.

(ii) Employed.—Many organisations in the past sprang into being mostly as some specific grievances became intolerable and almost in every case the coming into being of such an organisation was followed by a strike. Most of the older organisations died, because of non-cohesion amongst the members, absence of organisation, and the ability of employers to prevent formation of or breaking up of such associations.

The living organisations are (1) Labour Association. (2) Taxi Drivers Association. (3) Bus Drivers Association. (4) Kisan Sabha. (5) Postal Union. (6) Telegraph Union.

118. (i) As stated under question No. 116, the older organisations mostly came into being because of some specific grievances followed by a strike. Even if the strike was partially successful the combinations died generally because of action taken against ring leaders leaving no particular effect on industry except in so far as the demand for higher wages or better treatment were granted. In a country where the spirit is dead, occasionally a few men may arise to organise an association. As soon as these men are removed from service, the association lacks in organisation and spirit and dies.

(ii) Even the short-lived combinations as stated under question (116) have left lasting benefits as regards conditions of workers of those trades, and those living yet are generally showing substantial effect. The effect on the condition of workers would have been much greater had vested interests not so strongly been opposed to such organisations. As example we may mention the associations, however short-lived, which have left their mark on the workers of the respective trades.

(1) The Burma Railways Menials Association. (2) The Labour Association containing the workers of the Irrawaddy Flotilla. (3) The Burma Oil Company Workers Association. (4) The Coachmen and Syces Association. (5) The Dockyard Workers Association. (6) The Rickshaw Pullers Association. (7) The Taxi Drivers Association. (8) The Printers Association.

120. (i) So far as we are aware there is only one Registered Trade Union in Burma—the Taxi Drivers Association. In about 1927, the Taxi drivers and owners found that the police was very hard on it and great deal of harassment of Taxi owners and drivers was alleged at the hands of the police; the second main reason was that the laws which were enacted to regulate the Taxi drivers were too stringent, and fell hard on the Taxi trade. The third was that laws with regard to payment of fares by passengers were not satisfactory. In consequence of these troubles the trade formed a Union of Taxi Owners and Drivers. Although the Union was registered under the Trade Unions Act, correspondence with the police proved that the Police Department did not wish to take notice of the repeated letters and reminders sent to it, till a strike resulted, inconveniencing the public and bringing a big loss to the trade. Though the strike was entirely peaceful, the police tried to break the strike by creating split and by overawing the strikers by bringing cases against individuals and some innocent men had to suffer. The great misfortune in this country is that police is very much supported by the magistracy, as the

general idea prevails that the worker is as a rule a liar. It may also be stated that it has been the experience of the Union that the police, particularly those below the rank of Deputy Superintendent of Police, were far harder on the members of the Association than on those of the trade who kept out of the Union. Naturally this has tended to bring a split amongst the members. The Union gives badges to its members. Those who wear these badges were special targets of police attack and consequently the members, instead of being helped by the badges, received more harassment and preferred to keep the badges in their pockets. Although the Union has pointed out that large number of unregistered taxis ply against the registered taxis the police has not taken sufficient notice. But against all these odds the Union has made an effect and conditions have improved but, unfortunately, this very improvement becomes the cause for slackness of the members of the organisation. The greatest difficulty in these Unions is to get leaders amongst the workers who would command respect.

(ii) The attitude of the workers is at present very disappointing. Through constant worry and inability to take legal steps against illegal harassment, the members are discouraged. They find that a non-member has at present greater advantages forgetting that this position is temporary and that if they hold out success is in sight. But knowing fully the amount of harassment the men had to undergo, we think the Union has done well in existing under the present circumstances. They have complete control though the president and vice-president do not belong to the trade. They are only to guide them, but the initiative always comes from members. We append the rules and regulation of the Union.

(iii) In this case the Union as pointed out has grievance against the Police. There is complete unanimity amongst the owners and the employed and it is just as well that it is so, otherwise a combined fight could not have been carried on against the police.

121. (i) No effort was made by the Government to bring this Act (Trade Unions Act, 1926) before the workers. It was not translated into any vernaculars, at least it was not available in any but the English language in Burma. Very few persons know anything about it and certainly labour had no idea of it. The formation of trade unionism amongst the workers of large concerns is looked upon with great suspicion by the European and Indian employers and by the Government as well as being a move to create disaffection amongst the workers against ruling conditions and as against the concerns and generally those who take up this type of work are shadowed by the Government Criminal Investigation Department as political workers of the most dangerous type. Large concerns, some of them, have formed their own labour organisations. In their own way they are doing good work. But the essential advantage of trade unionism is lost because the worker never feels himself to be an independent man and does not learn, even by his own mistakes, the lesson of co-operation. In fact he feels his incapacity to do anything for himself. Further, the labour organisations of large concerns, however good and kind they may be are good and kind and naturally patronising which means that the labourer has little say in the matter. The labour organiser is the soul of the organisation, relied upon fully by the company but perhaps he does not command equal confidence of labour. From the spirit of a paternal attitude to a patronising attitude and from the latter to a domineering attitude are but two small steps, which a labour organiser steps down unknowingly. It is a fact that large companies where trade unionism could flourish prefer to have their own labour organisation and would go a long way to prevent trade unionism taking the place of their own labour organisations.

In fact they hate the name of Trade Unionism and will not have it if they can help it. As pointed out under Trade Organisations, any labour leader who tries to organise any association of labourers is dealt with mercilessly and thus the spirit of leaders is killed out. Many of these large concerns are far from towns and being in a secluded position it is not possible to obtain outside help. To the organisation of trade unionism the shifting nature of the labour is also in some trades a drawback.

(iii) It has been utilized only in one instance and in the case of Taxi Drivers Association and in this the result was not happy, as the members of the Union had to undergo a great deal of persecution and members, instead of taking a pride in their membership, rather hid it from the gaze particularly of the police. So long as Government does not change its attitude towards labour problems so long trade unionism cannot be promoted. In one instance in the strike of Irrawaddy Flotilla Co., Ltd., the strikers requested the Government to intervene. Government took no steps to settle the strike. The strike broke and the Government paid a loss owing to the strike to the Company though Government was not liable to pay for the losses according to their agreement with the Company.

There is another point also which militates against Trade Unionism and that is lack of competition in many of the chief industries in Burma. Monopoly of any trade or industry makes workers slaves of such companies. They cannot go out to work for any other company and the workers must accept such terms as offered and must remain in a condition in which such company wishes them to remain in.

In one instance, the Printers Association desired to form a trade union. Members of this association are also workers in Government Printing Press. Application was made a year ago. Reminders were sent to Labour Bureau; a reply has lately been received in the negative.

122. (ii) As pointed out there is only one trade union and its fight lies with the Police Department. The department is most unsympathetic.

(iii) We have no hesitation in saying that the state industrial concerns are quite hostile to the trade union movement. We may as an example mention that the employed in state industrial concerns are so dominated that they are not willing to come before this Hon'ble Commission to give evidence although we are well aware that they have grievances. This utter helplessness and fear has been created during the strikes which have taken place in some of the state industrial concerns like the Burma Railways, Port Commissioners, Government Printing Press.

In the Burma Railways there was an association; a strike took place. It was broken; leaders were severely punished, the association died.

The whole attitude of the Government of Burma has been inimical to trade associations or organisations and during strikes, etc., its attitude has been inimical towards labour, because in many cases the strike was against large European concerns which wielded great power.

The workers in the state industrial concern being well aware of this are naturally afraid and no one will dare come out to form a union. Such a man would receive short shrift from the manager or superintendent of the industrial concern.

To give a recent example; strike took place in the Government Press. The workers appealed through their Printers Association to the Government to appoint a conciliation board after the strike had already lasted some weeks. Government refused to appoint a conciliation board saying that it was not certain that conciliation board could be appointed to settle a dispute between workers and a state industrial concern. It also stated that in fact rules for such a conciliation board were not ready and thus forced the strikers to accept a one man (Government man) arbitration. But immediately the shipping dispute between Burmese and Telugu labourers and the stevedorers arose, conciliation board was appointed.

If the state had the least desire to help their workers we can assure the Commission that there would have been quite a number of labour unions.

#### XV.—Industrial Disputes.

123. The following strikes have taken place in Burma.

(1) Yenangyaung Oil Fields.—Burmese Labour.—They put forward grievances for hours of work, and general conditions of employment. The workers were far from Rangoon, and there was no person to advise them. A few prominent leaders who happened to be political leaders, went to Yenangyaung to do what they could for the workers. Because of their going there, it was made out that politics were involved. Police was let loose on Yenangyaung, and workers were put back into their proper place.

Since then the Yenangyaung Oil Fields Police Act was passed. It is attached herewith. Since then peace and quiet prevails there.

(2) Strike in the Refineries B. O. C. Syriam.—Grievances had been put forward several times which were summarily rejected. An arbitration board was appointed eventually deciding the dispute. It lasted considerable time.

(3) Burma Railways strike.—A large section of the Burma Railways was dissatisfied with the terms of employment. The workers made several attempts to get their grievances redressed. The management gave no satisfaction. The workers went on strike. It lasted a considerable time. Government, as usual, did not concern itself. The strikers could not hold out, and surrendered at discretion. Quite a large number of workers received punishments, sufficient to so break their spirits as not to enable them even to give evidence before this Commission.

(4) Irrawaddy Flotilla Co., Ltd.—Their men working on all sizes of launches had grievances. These were pressed again and again in the shape of petitions, without any result. Eventually the workers downed tools. Many efforts were made to get the strike settled. At public meetings Government was called upon to mediate, with no result. In the meantime the employers engaged some black leg labour. The strike lasted four or five months, the workers eventually went back poorer and wiser men—employers were paid a considerable amount of money by the Government for their losses, though the agreement did not entitle the Company to receive losses. Some letters had however been exchanged, and on the basis of those letters Government felt bound to pay the losses to the Company.

(5) Rangoon Electric Tramway Co., Limited.—Tram drivers strike. These men had general grievances, and after several petitions for redress of grievances, which were as usual rejected, they struck.

(6) The Government Printing Press.—The workers had memorialised to the Government on several occasions, without redress. Eventually they went to the Superintendent. The Superintendent says they were defiant and disobedient—the workers went on strike. The strike lasted nearly 60 days. Government was approached at an early stage to appoint a Conciliation Board—but did not; we are told the reasons for not appointing a Conciliation Board, was that Government was not sure whether it could in such circumstances appoint one, and the other

was that rules guiding conciliation board were not ready. Eventually it was agreed that Government should appoint the Labour Commissioner as arbitrator. Mr. Page knew nothing about the very intricate accounting system of wages, and no one could be found with sufficient knowledge of the trade to represent the workers. Consequently an outsider had to do the best he could, on behalf of the workers and we are glad to mention that he was a Burmese gentleman. We are not aware of the award made.

(7) Dock Labourers strike, 1920.—There was a strike and no increase was obtained, for wages which had not been increased for some seven or eight years.

(8) (a) Rickshaw pullers strike, (b) Hand cartmen's strike, (c) Taxi drivers strike.—These strikes were against regulations framed by Government Department. Representations had been made without avail. Strike followed. In most cases some advantage was gained.

(9) Shipping labour strike, 1930, May.—We append the Report of the Enquiry Committee. We do not touch upon the riots, as we are concerned with the strike and the results. We maintain that the strike should never have been prolonged to the extent it had been. Government took no notice of the strike—according to its usual procedure. The strike was prolonged to break the workers, and for that purpose other labour was employed.

124. Conciliation Board.—We have stated under (123) that in the case of the strike in Government Printing Press, Government did not appoint a conciliation board, because (1) Government did not know whether it could and (2) Rules were not ready.

(1) We desire it to be made quite clear in the Trades Disputes Act that that act applies to workers employed in any Government or semi-Government, or public concerns.

Shipping Labour Strike.—The Conciliation Board was not appointed till the matter had assumed very grave proportions, and hundreds of men had been injured.

So far as we know no rules guiding the Conciliation Board were ready when it was appointed; nor are they now, so far as we know.

(ii) Official Conciliations.—The chairman and Secretary of the present Conciliation Board are officials. The arbitrator in the matter of the Government Printing Press was an official. No other part has been played by them in any other strike.

Non-Official Conciliation.—In the B. O. C. strike non-official arbitrators were appointed.

In all the other strikes public spirited persons have tried to bring about settlements, but the Companies generally have been obdurate, always bent on giving a lesson to the Labourers; occasionally persons who have been mediating have come in for a share of that lesson for meddling in their affairs.

## XVII.—Administration.

133. Till now the labour employed in industries has been mostly Indian. The interest of the provincial legislature on labour questions was shown only four times in recent years.

(1) During the debate on the "Burma Tax on Sea Passengers Bill." Reference Burma Legislative Council Proceedings, 23rd March 1925, Volume III, No. 13. (2) Burma Oil Fields Amendment Act of 1927. (3) Resolution for appointment of a Committee to enquire into Labour conditions proposed by Mr. Narayan Rao. Government opposed the resolution and (4) During a debate on a resolution asking that a Committee to enquire into unemployment be appointed. This debate took place in August of this year. The official proceedings are not available, but we send 30 copies of official versions, published in one of the papers. Government opposed the resolution.

138. Very few work people have knowledge of the Factory Legislation, and that knowledge is very meagre. Unless labour officers themselves take some pains to make them acquainted, the employers certainly would not. But the language question often comes in the way, otherwise one way in which they could be made acquainted with would be for the Factory Officers visiting a factory calling all the men during their off hour and explaining to them the main sections of the Factory and Compensation Acts.

These acts are not available in the vernaculars, otherwise some one of the labourers could read out the Acts. We suggest that explanatory pamphlets in simple language be printed in vernaculars and sold at a nominal price.

142. We believe the plantations and docks are not inspected. We think it is very necessary that plantations and docks should be inspected.

Plantations.—Considerable number of persons are employed in these, but these being far away from the towns no information is available. Housing, sanitary arrangements, and arrangements for drinking water and medical aid are matters which require attention.

Docks.—Matters regarding safety of workers are of importance.

136. In Burma there are three officers connected with Labour: (1) Chief Inspector of Factories, (2) Director of Statistics and Labour Commissioner and (3) Assistant Protector of Emigrants and Immigrants.

(1) With regard to the Chief Inspector of Factories, we deal under (139) "Factory Inspection."

(2) With regard to the Director of Statistics and Labour Commissioner, the work that we see before us is:—(a) The "Report of an Enquiry into the Standard of Cost of Living of the Working Classes in Rangoon." This book is a valuable contribution by the past Director of Statistics to literature on Labour Conditions in Burma—a subject in which few were interested till lately, and Government the least. This book has, as already pointed out, to be read with considerable caution.

(b) The present officer we know has helped in Committees recently. (c) He has been appointed an arbitrator in a dispute between the Superintendent of Government Press and the workers. (d) He is the Commissioner for the purposes of the Workmen's Compensation Act. We take this opportunity of acknowledging the independence of his awards, though we may not always see eye to eye with him. (e) Since the riots and the formation of the Conciliatory Board he has been acting as the Secretary of that Board. We generally acknowledge his sympathy for Labour.

Statistics and Labour Problems.—We would however, press this point, that in Burma we are particularly weak in statistics. No statistics are available on unemployment, and wages and on so many other matters which are necessary factors in showing the prosperity or otherwise of Industries, and generally of the country, and consequently of Labour. There is no officer to co-ordinate statistics of different departments, nor to direct departments of Government to furnish in their reports further statistical information. The statistical tables at present given in many of the reports mean little.

As regards labour, we believe that labour problems in the future, even in Burma, will assume great importance. Further, in our opinion the Labour Commissioner should be in direct touch with Labour, and feel himself to be friend, philosopher and guide of Labour; welfare work, educational facilities, housing problems, recreation for labour should form part of his duties. Help and encouragement and support in the formation of Trade Unions and Co-operative Societies should come within his sphere of activities.

Statistics and Labour are now recognised to be specialised subjects. Both are advancing rapidly; for both intimate knowledge of the country is necessary. We may remind the Commission that probably Burma would shortly be separated from India. Till now alteration in statistical tables and in labour laws and regulations have been initiated in India. With separation Burma would have to take charge of these subjects fully.

We would therefore suggest that Government of Burma should select a promising student in economics from the University College and send him out to make a special study of statistics and Labour in Europe and America. On his return he may work as the Assistant Director of Statistics and Labour Commissioner and later take over charge of the post.

(3) Assistant Protector of Emigrants and Immigrants.—The work of this officer is to keep in touch with Indian conditions and generally to help Labour in all ways possible. He has to see that agreements of recruited labour are observed. The position is one of great trust and responsibility and offers many sources of temptations. The present incumbent has recently taken up the post. We have no doubt he would help the labourers to the best of his abilities. We would, however, place this point of view before the Commission that the questions arising out of Indian Labour are becoming more and more complicated, specially so when Burma is separated. We consider it necessary that an officer of the Indian Imperial Service should be stationed in Burma as Protector of Emigrants and Immigrants from India, in the manner of Ceylon.

Suggestions.—We suggest that the following trades be brought under the Factories Act:—

I. Inland vessels of all types, worked with mechanical power.—This is a large and important trade in which, according to the Census of 1921, the following were engaged:—

	For all vessels.	Total supported.	Workers.	
			Males.	Females.
"Born Out"	.. ..	118,083	64,920	2,350
"Born In"	.. ..	34,874	33,447	29
		83,209	31,473	2,321

At the present time there is no means of knowing the number employed in the different types of vessels.

Accidents.—We however know that considerable number of accidents do take place in vessels with mechanical power; and also that there is a great deal of complaint with regard to excessive hours of work and we consider it very necessary that workers should have the benefit of Workmen's Compensation Act, and come under the Factories Act, so that there might be some authority which would enforce hours of work, and rules with regard to Health.

II. Lime kilns and godowns.—This is also an important trade, and we know that whole villages live on this trade near Mandalay and Prome and Amherst Districts. The workers of the kilns and in the godowns in Rangoon and in other towns in our opinion require looking after. The hygienic conditions do not seem to be what we would like them to be.

III. Builders Trade.—We think this trade is now of such importance, and of such a nature in Rangoon at least, that factors of safety must be now applied to it.

IV. P. W. D. and Railways (Roads and Bridges).—Group III.—Persons (other than labourers) employed in maintenance of roads and bridges:—

Workers and Dependants.	Workers.	
	Males.	Females.
4,608	1,703	211

  

Workers and Dependants.	Workers.	
	Males.	Females.
50,210	26,247	6,023

Earthwork carried on for road making or laying of rail track is a trade in which large number of workers are employed. It is not possible to give any figures. But we know that works of large magnitude are carried on and we think that it is time those trades were brought under the Act to persuade the employers to give better accommodation, keep doctors in large camps; and give compensation for injuries and sickness.

V. Rice Mills (boiled rice).—In this trade a large number of women are employed. There are two points which we would refer to:—

(1) When the boiled paddy is brought out from the boiler, it is hot, and water would be dripping and (2) During the rainy season, for the purpose of drying the boiled paddy, a steam platform is created. The women have to walk on this steaming platform, for raking the paddy, bare-footed.

Both these operations seem to us of a nature which must cause a number of accidents by scalds, and the second operation is known to be positively of a somewhat painful nature. We do not know what is the effect on health of these operations.

VI. Forest Extraction.—Group 43. Sawyers—

Workers and Dependants.	Workers.	
	Males.	Females.
58,706	25,156	661

A considerable number of workers are employed in this trade. They have to live in forests, in most cases in unhealthy surroundings, with bad housing and bad water supply. The number suffering from sickness and accidents is said to be large. Their condition does not attract attention because they are out of sight. We press that this occupation be brought under the Factories Act; or some other means may be found to regulate housing conditions, medical aid, etc.

VII. Wharves and Docks, and Shipping.—We suggest that as machinery is used for loading and unloading goods, wharves should be brought under the Factories Act. We see no reason why these should be exempted. Number of accidents take place because of overloading of slings and cranes, and it is time there was some authority to see that the machinery used was in proper order, and that proper safeguards for the workers both at the wharves and in the ships was provided. We therefore suggest that these should be brought under the Factories Act.

139. (i) Although considerable amount of improvement in the management of the Factories Act is visible, and though we realise the efforts of the Chief Inspector of Factories and his assistants to bring greater pressure on large and small employers of labour for the better treatment of their labour, we consider the staff very inadequate, and believe that unless and until the staff is sufficient to deal with the growing needs of factories, and of labour, all regulations for labour are bound to be failures. As we have already stated, and the statement will bear repetition we are most anxious that the rules and regulations already framed should be properly applied. This cannot be done with two or three officers for the whole province. The Annual Report on the working of the Factories Act for 1928 states that out of 968 running factories in Burma, 253, i.e., 25 per cent. "escaped inspection." This is not at all satisfactory. In the note from the Secretary to the Financial Commissioner (Transferred Subjects) to the Secretary to the Government of Burma, paragraph 2. it is stated that the Acting Chief Inspector of Factories

had put up proposals for increase of staff, but the proposals had been turned down by the Government of Burma, "in view of the provincial finances." We doubt if there is any other department for which the Government of Burma has a smaller staff or in regard to which it is more stingy.

(iii) In 1927, the number of Factories in other provinces were:—Madras 1,198, Bombay 1,398, Bengal 1,234, Burma 923. It must also be remembered that the area of Burma is larger than that of any other province. A comparison of work done in Burma with that of other provinces of India will strengthen our point that the Factories Act is not enforced in Burma as it should be because of the shortage of staff.

(iv) We quote the figures of 1926-27 from the Statistical Abstract for British India—pages 668-669 for convictions and accidents.

	Total employed.	Convictions.	Total.	Serious.	Minor.	Total.
Madras .. ..	127,411	569	15	267	981	1,263
Bombay .. ..	382,255	537	49	873	3,060	3,984
Bengal .. ..	550,923	129	76	1,123	1,811	3,010
Punjab .. ..	52,648	36	15	20	488	523
Burma .. ..	100,759	33	28	282	1,078	1,388
Bihar and Orissa .. ..	74,323	1	54	366	1,803	2,223
Central Provinces .. ..	67,106	85	5	35	293	243

From the above, accidents per 10,000 of workers is as follows:—

	Madras.	Bombay.	Bengal.	Burma.
Total .. ..	1.17	1.28	1.37	2.78
Serious .. ..	20.96	22.86	20.38	28.00
Minor .. ..	77.00	80.00	32.87	107.00
Total .. ..	99.13	104.14	54.62	137.78

The above figures clearly carry condemnation of the working of the Act in this province and no further comments are necessary. Besides, complaint is often made that correspondence on important matters do not receive sufficiently prompt attention from the department. We can quite understand that if the Chief Inspector and his Assistant are on tour, such correspondence must await their arrival, and that is one more reason that the staff be increased.

Manner of increasing the staff.—We have something to say in this matter. The factories in Burma, except some, employ very few workers. The following daily average per factory figures will make our point clear:—

All factories.	Burma.	Rangoon.	Burma less Rangoon.
1929 .. ..	100	207	80
1921 .. ..	127	225	99
1911 .. ..	112	172	121
	Burma.	Rangoon.	Burma less Rangoon.
Rice Mills—			
1929 .. ..	65	241	53
1921 .. ..	98	279	71
1915 .. ..	114	217	84
Saw Mills—			
1929 .. ..	87	236	56
1921 .. ..	92	214	60
1915 .. ..	80	218	51

We give the statement below for Rice Mills and Saw Mills in Rangoon. Outside Rangoon there are very few large rice mills and saw mills; the other large concerns are the few Petroleum refineries, Namtu Mines, Irrawaddy Flotilla Dockyards, Railway and Tramway Workshops, and few other foundries, and Adamji Haji Dawood's Match Factory, largest in India.

Rice Mill in Rangoon including Rice Mill on the Kanaungto Creek in the Hanthawadd District up to 21st August 1930.

Persons employed.	Number of Mills.	Total number of persons.
Over 750 .. .. .	5	6,126
.. 500 and less than 750 .. .. .	5	2,912
.. 400 .. .. . 499 .. .. .	2	864
.. 300 .. .. . 399 .. .. .	2	600
.. 200 .. .. . 209 .. .. .	10	2,528
.. 100 .. .. . 199 .. .. .	10	1,298
.. 50 .. .. . 99 .. .. .	12	850
Less than 50 .. .. .	13	426
	59	15,604

Saw Mill in Rangoon Town District up to 31st August 1930.

Persons employed.	Number of Mills.	Total number of persons.
Over 750 .. .. .	3	3,131
.. 500 and less than 750 .. .. .	1	745
.. 400 .. .. . 499 .. .. .	1	447
.. 300 .. .. . 399 .. .. .	2	714
.. 200 .. .. . 299 .. .. .	Nil.	Nil.
.. 100 .. .. . 199 .. .. .	8	998
.. 50 .. .. . 99 .. .. .	6	468
Less than 50 .. .. .	11	297
	32	6,800

Besides the factories, we have suggested several other trades to be brought under the Factories Act. These are of a diverse nature, but no individual unit is large or complicated, for instance the Inland Vessels.

We therefore strongly recommend that the new staff should be gathered from this province and no outsider should be brought. These can be recruited in two grades:—

	Ra.
(a) Assistant Inspector of Factories—salary .. .. .	350—500
(b) Supervisor of factories—salary .. .. .	150—350

Assistant Inspectors of Factories should be University College men, and men with similar qualifications. Supervisor of Factories should be men from the Insein Technical Institute mechanical side, and men with similar qualifications: provided that after ten years' service vacancies should be filled from the Supervisor's grade to vacancies in the Assistant Inspector grade. For the Assistant Inspector and Supervisor to be of real service, and get into touch with Burmans, Bengalis, Madrasis and Oriya labour, the main classes, it would be necessary for these officers to be conversant with the language of the respective groups they would be attached to. We consider this highly essential. The Factories Act and the Compensation Act are not yet understood by the workers,—and these officers could help in making them understand these,—which we consider to be a very important factor, under the prevailing conditions of labour.

Therefore, in the calling of applications, mention should be made of the number required knowing each group language.

Unless these candidates have already studied the requisite subjects, they should be made to appear for an examination for their respective grades, not for testing their knowledge of en-

gineering, but the knowledge of Factories Act, Compensation Act and similar Acts. The best from each language group should be chosen. These officers should then receive further practical training, under the Chief Inspector of Factories, and they should be made to specialise in distinct trades. These services should be permanent. Objection may be raised to the language basis on the plea of Burmanisation of services. We state that sufficient men born in the country can be had knowing the necessary languages. Further, we state that when Burmese labour does become predominant, more and more Burmese knowing officers would naturally be taken.

We urge very strongly the need of strengthening the staff, as without the means of putting the laws, rules and regulations which have, and may be framed, it is useless for the Government to shed tears over the poor labourers.

### XVIII.—Intelligence.

143. (i) The present statistics on labour are extremely meagre with regard to—

(a) employment: (1) Burmese, (2) Indians, in different industries. (b) health. (c) unemployment. No statistics available.

(ii) (a) Returns are asked for from Factory employers, but even these are not received properly and no sufficient steps are taken to enforce sending of these returns. No returns are asked for from other large employers of labour, like wharf labours, shipping labours, etc.

144. Reference.—Annual Report on the working of the Indian Factories Act, 1911, in Burma. We suggest that two more tables should be introduced showing:—

I. (1) (a) number of workmen lodged in barracks. (b) number of workmen lodged outside, in all factories, by Districts and principal towns in the Districts.

(2) number of workmen of factories died of sickness shown under Districts and principal towns:—(a) living in barracks, and (b) outside.

II. Under statement IV, page 54, "Daily number of persons employed", should also be shown the number of Indian workers and the number of Burmese workers.

III. Another statement should be added to the report showing per day—

(a) average of permanent workers, (b) average of temporary workers divided into (a) Indians, (b) Burmese.

IV. Statement IV should be split up into two by showing males Burmese and Indians in a separate statement and females Burmese and Indians separately.

Death Statistics. Reference.—"Report on the Public Health Administration of Burma."

We suggest—(a) that a statement on the lines of supplementary annual statement VA, "Death Register according to sex in the four main classes in the towns of Burma" be included showing the death statistics of labour, excluding agricultural labour, (b) that similar statement be included in the report of all Municipalities in Burma or, if this be not deemed possible, at least in the Municipalities of—

Rangoon, Mandalay, Moulmein, Bassein, Prome, Toungoo, Pegu, Yenaugyaung, Syriam and Namtu, etc.

Statistics of Disease.—That deaths registered under—(a) Small-pox, (b) Fevers, (c) Dysentery and Diarrhoea, (d) Respiratory diseases, and (e) Plague, be shown divided into the main four classes also.

Death Statistics.—That a special Death Table by age between the age of 15 and 50 be started, showing the deaths by the four main classes of Christians, Buddhists, Muslims and Hindus, with special reference to labourers (exclusive of agricultural labourers) in districts and towns of Burma.

Unemployment.—(a) Machinery for getting information of unemployment in different sections of home or other industries, including wharfage and shipping labour, be organised and proper statistics be made available at intervals.

144. *Possibility of Improvement in Statistics.*—We beg to suggest the following:—

I. Census Report—Table XXA.—Part III. Heading Transport should show the following sub-headings. Employment in:—

(a) Vessels with Mechanical powers, (b) Vessels without Mechanical powers, (c) Dockyard  
(1) Workshop, (2) Navigation, (d) Railway. (1) Transport (2) Workshops,  
(e) Tramway Works, (1) Transport, (2) Workshops, (f) Wharfage, (g) Shipping.

II. Heading Mines. Sub-heading "Petroleum"; the following sub-headings be added:—  
(a) Oil fields. (b) Pumping Stations. (c) Refineries. (d) Workshops.

III. The Special Industrial Census must take the whole of the Trade and not only a part of the trade.

IV. The Headings of Employment in Statements I and II of the Factories Report must correspond with that of the Census till the next Census.

V. In the Factories Report under heading "Mines" the number of and employment in wolfram and tin mines should be shown.

VI. The enumeration of districts in all Government Reports should be in the same sequence. In this respect for instance the Report on the Working of the Factories Act, and the Report on the Workmen's Compensation Act differ.

VII. Headings of Statistical Report should be on the basis of the Heading of the Census Report, and if possible should not be changed till the next Census. If a change becomes necessary, it should be made in a manner which would not break the continuity, making comparisons impossible except with great difficulty.

145. (i) We can definitely state that in most cases the cost of living statements of Indians are wrong. Leaving aside other factors we would draw attention to the fact that the deductions made by the maistries or sub-maistries have neither been deducted in the calculation of the earnings nor from the monthly budget. That there are such deductions Mr. Bennison himself proves. The salaries are calculated on the daily earning capacity, irrespective of the average number of days during the month during which work is available. The resultant profits shown as sent home are therefore entirely fictitious. We consider that it is better not to have cost of living worked out, rather than have such manifestly misleading figures which tend to create and have created the idea that Indian labour is all too well paid and is carrying away crores of rupees annually. It has tended to harden up employers against the workers and created dissatisfaction in other fields of labour. Results achieved have proved disastrous to Indian labour.

146. Much greater attention is necessary on the Health statistics and Mortality statistics and Unemployment statistics of labour. Separate statistics referring to labour will at once bring out the sores of society and create public opinion which evidently is so necessary for the improvement of the lot of workers. If Burma is to stand competition with other countries it can only do so on the legs of labour and it is necessary for capital and brain to understand this fact thoroughly. Nothing can so move as the cold figures of death, disease and unemployment, whether it be the Government or the capital. We believe conscience of both are rousable.

Mines.—The extraction of minerals on large basis is confined to—

(a) Iron ore .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	employing 1,048 workers.
(b) Lead and silver ore .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	5,384 "
(c) Tin and wolfram .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	7,648 "
(d) Copper ore .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	8 "
(e) Gems .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	507 "
(f) Limestone .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	358 "
(g) Igneous rocks .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	2,604 "
(h) Latemite .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	312 "

The above figures are extracted from the report of the Chief Inspector of Mines in India, ending 31st December 1928. They are only for labour working underground, or in open working or on surface. Those employed in metallurgical and other works are not recorded under "Mines", but under "Factories". It will be seen that the working of the Lead and Silver Mines, Tin and Wolfram Mines and Igneous Rock Quarries and Iron Ore are important.

(1) *Lead and Silver, iron ore and limestone* are mostly worked by Burma Corporation, Ltd., in Northern and Southern Shan States. On page 3 of the Report above referred to, it is said that this firm employs in all departments a total of 16,275 persons, but taking the figures for Lead, Iron Ore and Lime Stone as all referring to this Company, the total employed in actual extraction work would be about 7,000, and employed in other departments about 9,000, but in Factories Report under "Lead smelting and lead rolling mills", the number is given as 3,837.

General Conditions.—We are glad to bring to the attention of the Commission the words of praise uttered by His Excellency the Governor on his visit to the Mines. He said, "They would find not merely a great mining property but a happy, contented and well cared for labour force."

Employment.—Chinese and Indians generally.

Disease.—20 cases of cholera took place, with 18 deaths.

*Tavoy and Mergui tin and Wolfram Mines.*—These employ chiefly Chinese and Indian labour. Most of the work is done on "tribute labour".

Condition of Work.—During the dry season there is not much malaria, but during the monsoon, which is really the working season, the areas are very malarious, and we believe a large percentage of workers suffer from malaria, and other jungle fevers. Some of these fevers cause death, or so debilitate the worker that it incapacitates him for months together.

Monsoons in Tavoy and Mergui are very heavy, the average rainfall being 275 inches. Under these circumstances the Chinese workers generally demand opium, and most of the mines have Opium licences. The Indian workers also, we learn, now take to it to a much larger degree.

According to the Opium Convention, the common opium cannot be given for medicinal purposes, and medicinal opium is a well defined article in the Convention. Still the old system continues, in direct contravention of the Convention.

*Mokpalin Government Stone Quarries.*—We would point out to the Commission that Government employs on this some 1,100 convicts. We question the advisability of doing so at a time when unemployment is so great.

We are not aware of the actual number of accidents in this quarry, but we do find that Government convict labour forms nearly half the total, and the Commission will no doubt notice the heavy rate of accidents in the section of Igneous Rocks. What is the share of the Mokpalin Quarries in these accidents is a matter which no doubt the Commission will ascertain.

We are also not aware as to whether the convicts come under the Workmen's Compensation Act or not. If they do not, we would strongly urge that this labour should be stopped. If they do, we do not know how or in what way the compensation claims are made, or in what manner they are paid. These points no doubt the Commission will enquire into.

(2) *Mineral Oil Production.*—We have been able to obtain readily enough the quantity of mineral oil production, its value, etc., but as to the man power used in the actual production of oil fields, though we have made enquiries, we have been able to get no figures. The man power in refineries is stated in the Factories Report, but the man power on the Oil Fields is, so far as our investigation goes, nowhere to be found. Neither is there any report from which we can get the number of accidents similar to the Report of the Chief Inspector of Mines in India. All that we can get to is the number of persons who have received compensation.

We are therefore not able to give any substantial information with regard to this Industry. We would however state that there was a strike in 1921 on the Oil Fields, and after that a Yenang-sung Oil Fields Act was forced through the Legislature which in our opinion has absolutely suppressed labour, and there is no chance of labour being able to organise itself there. That Act should be repealed.

44 and 140. (ii) The total number of accidents for Burma in the extraction of Minerals, including gems, lime stone and igneous rocks is as under :—

	Death.		Serious.		Total.	
	Number.	Per 1,000.	Number.	per 1,000.	Number.	Per 1,000
<i>Under Ground.</i>						
<i>Under Ground.</i>						
Total Burma ..	6	1.12	74	14.14	80	15.29
Total India ..	193	1.64	437	3.62	630	5.26
<i>Open Working.</i>						
Total Burma ..	10	1.02	22	2.26	32	3.29
Total India ..	35	0.44	73	0.92	108	1.38
<i>Surface Working.</i>						
Total Burma ..	3	1.02	37	12.67	40	13.70
Total India ..	31	0.44	183	2.60	214	3.04
<i>Separate.</i>						
Total Burma ..	18	..	110	..	..	6.88
Total India ..	221	..	654	..	..	..

Total of underground, open surface, and separate—

*Burma—*

Number .. .. . 275

Per 1,000 .. .. . 15.36

We draw your attention to the following accidents per 1,000 of workers in—

	Total employed.	Workings.	Separate.	Total accidents.
Lime stones .. .. .	358	16.76	5.58	22.34
Lead ore .. .. .	5,384	15.97	14.30	30.27
Igneous rocks .. .. .	2,604	14.20	7.21	21.41
Iron ore.. .. .	1,048	3.84	3.81	7.62
Tin and wolfram .. .. .	7,648	2.35	1.96	7.31

Against the 275 accidents in the Mines of Burma, prosecutions and convictions were as under :—

District.	Number of prosecutions.	Number of persons prosecuted.	Number of persons convicted.
Mergui .. .. .	3	3	..
Tavoy .. .. .	1	1	..
Thaton .. .. .	1	1	1
Total, Burma .. .. .	5	5	..
Total, India .. .. .	88	130	96

Convictions to Prosecutions—

Burma .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	Nil.
India .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	74 per cent.

Prosecution to Accidents—

Burma .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	1.89 per cent.
India .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	5.65 per cent.

In Mergui and Tavoy, the prosecutions were under regulation 3(1) of the Indian Metalliferous Mines Regulations, 1926, and in Thaton under regulation 82 of the same Act. The figures we have given for accidents and prosecutions are surprising and demand investigation. They strikingly prove that supervision in the Mines is not at all sufficient, and that there should be an officer in Burma who would be in close touch with mining and quarrying conditions. We feel that enough provision for safety could not have been made, and life is not counted as costly as mineral.

II. *Mineral Oils.*—We have stated above that we could not obtain details of workers employed, nor of total accidents that may have taken place. But we give a statement showing the accidents which have resulted in death, or permanent disablement. For particulars of these, Appendices to the Annual Report on the Working of the Compensation Act in Burma for 1929 may be referred. The number of employed mentioned hereunder denote the total number working in units in which accidents took place :—

Total employed.	Death.	Permanent disablement.	Compensation.	
			Death. Rs.	Permanent disablement. Rs.
29,355	24	39	27,562	14,011
Accidents per 1,000 workers—	1.29	2.01	.	.

So far as we can see, these accidents were divided between Oil Fields and Refineries and Workshops, etc., in the following proportion :—

Oil Fields—				
Total employed.	6,030	Death.	11	Permanent disablement.
Accidents per 1,000	1.82		3.48	
Refineries, etc.—				
Total employed.	13,325	Death.	13	Permanent disablement.
Accidents per 1,000	0.97		1.42	

We are of opinion that the incidence of accidents on the Oil Fields and in Refineries, etc., is worthy of investigation by the Commission, as it is evident, particularly so with regard to Oil Fields, that there is need for "Rigorous Administration" and "Safety" devices, necessary to prevent accidents.

143. Mineral Oil.—With regard to labour employed on the Oil Fields and accidents, no statistics seem to be available.

Compensation Act, Report on.—We suggest that the report should be divided into Factories, Mines and Mineral Oil, and statements for each should be prepared separately.

### I.—Burma Railway Supplementary Memoranda.

Reference.—Burma Railways Annual Reports for 1929-30.

• Employment :—APPENDIX I.—Statement of Staff.

		Numbers.		
		Open Line.	Construction.	Total.
Europeans .. .. .	1928-29	126	12	138
	1929-30	129	7	136
Hindus (including Audit)	1928-29	16,735	625	17,368
	1929-30	16,707	129	16,836
Muslims .. .. .	1928-29	3,035	61	3,096
	1929-30	3,439	34	3,473
Anglo-Indians and Domiciled Europeans.	1928-29	667	9	676
	1929-30	694	1	695
Other Classes .. .. .	1928-29	6,814	518	7,332
	1929-30	7,335	504	7,839
Statutory Indians .. .. .	1928-29	27,251	1,211	28,462
	1929-30	28,175	668	28,843
Total .. .. .	1928-29	27,377	1,223	28,600
	1929-30	28,304	675	27,979

Reference : Table G, page 109. General Administration.—

#### Sub-Head—

	Rs.
4. Contributions to provident institutions .. .. .	7,74,846
5. Gratuities .. .. .	2,75,000
6. Compensation (other than those included in E III-10.) .. .. .	8,938
7. Education Grants .. .. .	20,000
8. Health and Welfare Service .. .. .	2,70,198

We have no doubt the Commission would enquire into the question as to what amount of these very beneficent payments (1) directly (2) indirectly serve the (a) labourers, and (b) the lower grade staff, which really need their help. For instance, it needs to be examined what institutions are contributed to under *Sub-head 4*, and how these contributions affect labour; under *Sub-head 5* What is the percentage which affects labour and what is the form of gratuity; under *Sub-head 7* How many schools, and what types of schools are at present worked, and whether the amount of expenditure is in proportion to the magnitude of the concern and the number of men employed, is not too small; and which races it affects.

*Sub-Head.*—What is the amount spent on "Health", and what on "Welfare Services."

*Health.*—With regard to health, housing is a matter of importance; arrangements, both in Rangoon and elsewhere, are not quite satisfactory. The question of over-crowding, and houses not being put into proper repairs are matters of complaint.

*Medical Aid.*—We believe the Burma Railways have a regular staff, and a dispensary for their staff in Rangoon. However, both at Insein and Myitnge they have large workshops, and what arrangements they have for these and other places is not known.

*Welfare Service.*—We have not been informed of any. But if there is one, the nature of it, and the effect on workers may kindly be ascertained.

We have only such information as we could pick up, and would suggest some matters on which we think light may be thrown. These are: (a) Leave Rules, (b) Gratuities and pensions, (c) Manner of recruitment; whether it is not left too much in the hands of the subordinates,

thus opening a way to corruption and favouritism, (d) Manner of appointment from temporary to permanent posts—Is it not a fact that many old temporary hands are skipped in the appointment to permanent posts and new men are appointed, (e) Do the men get the same terms of service, generally, as in Indian Railways.

Apprentices.—We understand the Railways have a system of their own with regard to apprentices. Consequently they do not take men from the Insein Technical Institute as apprentices, and even if they do, they give preference to their own apprentices. The reason we understand is that the Railways drawing and other works are of a special nature. But we submit that the Insein Technical men have and should be given a chance. The reasons of the strike, and the result will give the Commission a very good idea of the grievances.

Compensation Claims—Chapter V, page 7.—Compensation claims against goods were Rs. 23,057, representing 632 claims; and of this amount the Railways were able to recoup itself to the extent of Rs. 5,129, by debits against the staff for negligence, and by sale of unclaimed and damaged goods, leaving a charge of Rs. 18,828. The cost to the Railways last year was Rs. 34,696.

It is worth ascertaining, what was the amount recouped from Railway servants, and whether the recouping on the ground of negligence may not be overdone; and is not in the nature of "fine"; this is possible in view of money value to the Railways.

Hours of Employment of Railway Servants.—(Indian Railways Act Amendment 1930, Chapter XVIII, page 20).

"It is the desire of the Railway Board that the Act should come into force as quickly as possible on Railways, and, in no case, later than the 29th February, 1932."

An Officer has been placed on duty with regard to this.

Staff and Amelioration of Conditions.—We regret there is no chapter in this very valuable Report with regard to its workers. We think a chapter giving details of "Housing," "Medical Relief", "Welfare Work", "Education", "Accidents and Compensation," and any material improvements or alterations in the terms of employment may be mentioned with advantage. The Report deals as usual with Rs., As. and pies, but not with the human factor.

Accidents and Compensation.—APPENDIX III—Table 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 deal with these.

It will be seen from Table A,\* that fatal accidents amongst passengers and others is 13, and 110, and for servants 11. Injured number of passengers and others 40 and 93, and servants 202. We think this is a high incidence of accidents.

We would point out that accidents to passengers and others in India have been very largely reduced as the following figures will prove:—

Reference: Statistical Abstract for British India.

Statement No. 201A, page 449\*.

Compensation.—As pointed out in Table A the number of servants killed were eleven and injured 202. Table B\* shows the number of all accidents through mis-adventure or negligence. We are not aware who decides, whether an accident was through one or the other reasons. If it is the Railway authority, it would have the best of reasons to push up the figures for negligence, both for passengers and servants, because they remove the charge of negligence from the departments and also escape payment of compensation.

Workmen's Compensation Report for 1929 gives the figures of compensation paid by the Burma Railways, which are as follows:—

	Fatal.	Permanent disablement.	Compensation Paid.	
			Fatal.	Permanent disablement.
			Rs.	Rs.
1929 .. ..	Nil.	2	Nil.	2,662
1928 .. ..	1	3	600	204

The Factory Report does not show the accidents under Railways in Appendix B, page 19. We do not know whether compensation other than shown in the Workmen's Compensation Report is paid. In the Railway Report, page 109, under Sub-head: Compensation (other than those included in E-III, 10) for Rs. 8,935, is mentioned. E-III 10 is compensation for goods. If this is the amount paid towards compensation for those killed and injured, it seems to be a very small amount for 11 killed and 202 injured. Nor do we know how the compensation is assessed. In any case the cases should be mentioned in the Workmen's Compensation Report. We are glad to see there was no fatal accident in any of the Railway workshops, which employs a very large number of workmen.

\* Not printed.

## II.—Launch Staff of the Burma Oil Company, Limited.

5. Recruitment is made in Syriam.

4. Families are left behind. All are from Chittagong.

III. *Housing provision.*—Two years ago housing was provided. Then they were told that they would have to remove for a short time as new buildings were being put up and they would be provided with house later. Since then they have been living in rented houses. Other services have in the meantime been provided with housing but they have still to live in rented houses. We want the company to supply housing to us as it supplies to other departments. The company has paid us no house allowance in the meantime.

IV. *Extent of medical facilities.*—The Company has 2 doctors, one at Syriam and one at Dunneceadaw. The Doctor's office at Dunneceadaw is in the factory compound. Sick persons have to visit him. Medicine is supplied free. They are given sick leave without pay.

First aid is not provided in the launches.

*Hours of work.*—Hours of work are from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. They have their breakfast on the launch, if work is required at night another shift takes the place.

82. *Wages.*—(a) (1) Serang (certificated) 4 small launches Rs. 90 per month, Serang (certificated) 4 big launches, Rs. 100 per month, without increment, plus Rs. 1-8-0 per month for clothes. (2) Assistant Serang in big launches Rs. 2-1-0 per day. (3) Sukhani, small launches Rs. 1-9-0 per day. Sukhani, big launches Rs. 1-9-0 per day, Sukhani, for clothes Rs. 1-8-0 per month. (4) Khalasis, Rs. 1-2-0 per day, Khalasis, for clothes Rs. 1-8-0 per month. (5) Cook for big launches As. 13 per day, Cook, for clothes Rs. 1-8-0 per month excluding the cook.

(b) (1) Maistry. (2) Driver. (3) Oilman. (4) Fireman. (5) Cook big launches, As. 15 per day.

In small launches one cook is provided for both the sections. Other departments of labour get a yearly increment and they also get leave with pay. But we neither get increment nor leave with pay. We suggest that it is not a good system to keep the workers on one wage even for 30 years and that a yearly increment should be given by the Company to us.

A Khalasi after 5 years service can appear for examination of a serang, but takes nearly 12 years to become a serang as he had to work as a sukhani for five years or six years.

*Leave Rules.*—Some years ago in about 1926 agreements were signed that the workers must go on leave every two years for six months without pay. New men are not required to sign but the custom still prevails. This falls very heavily on the workers.

We therefore very strongly suggest that the workers should go on leave after two years with two months leave with pay with four months without pay. We further suggest that we should be given passage to and from or on the oiler tanker of the Company going to Chittagong. This was permitted formerly but are not allowed now.

With regard to promotion strict watch should be kept by the highest officers that no favouritism prevails.

*Payments* are made direct to workmen by the Company. There is no corruption with regard to receipt of wages.

Payment is made within 15 days of the month following.

Indebtedness exists, because of system of marriage expenses.

There is no system of bonus or *bakhsish*. But of three persons who completed 25 years service two persons were given one-third the pay as pension and recently one person was given only one-fourth of the pay as pension.

There are no Labour Associations or Trades Unions. We do not know of any Labour Bureau of the Company. It does not affect us.

*Industrial Disputes.*—There has been no strike. Wages were increased in 1920 when there was a strike in the works at Syriam.

*General.—Water.*—Formerly there was a system to supply drinking water, bathing and for ablutions. An order has now been passed that no water would be supplied. Formerly a long hose was attached and the tanks in the launches filled up with sweet water. Now the water has to be carried from the pipe stand to the launches. Without sweet water for drinking and ablutions we find it very difficult to live, particularly because we burn oil in boilers and the heat is excessive and bathing becomes necessary. The reason given to us is that by taking water in tanks the launch gets heavy. In Port Commissioners, Port Principals, Irrawaddy Flotilla Company's launches are all supplied with sweet water sufficient for the needs of the workers. The B. O. C. has also followed this custom from time immemorial. Neither do we see any loss to the Company in permitting their workers to have sufficient water through the hose pipe.

### III.—Port Commissioners' Launch Service.

I. 5. Recruitment in Rangoon.

4. Family is left behind.

*Workers.—Launch Service—*

(a) 1. Serang. 2. Sukani. 3. Khalasis.

(b) 1. Maistry. 2. Assistant Maistry. 3. Oilmen. 4. Fireman.

(c) 1. Leadmen. 2. Tindal. 3. Khalasis. 4. Sampanwallah.

(c) Represents Surveymen.

There are no non-Mohamedans in sections (a) and (b).

There is un-employment to the extent of 20 per cent.

*Housing Provision.* (a) *Monkey Point.*—There is a house in Monkey Point belonging to Port Commissioners wherein 100 men are staying.

(b) *King's Bank.*—There is another Port Commissioners' house here. About 500 workers are living.

*Drinking Water.—Monkey Point.*—Water is not sufficient, the tank being too small.

*Latrines.—(a) Monkey Point.*—For 100 men there are 4 latrines. These are cleaned up only once in 24 hours.

(b) *King's Bank.*—There are 8 latrines for 500 workmen, and they are 100 yards away from the barracks. These are cleaned only once in 24 hours. We suggest that these latrines should be made closer to the barracks and should be cleaned up 4 times a day. A sweeper should be on the premises.

The people staying in Monkey Point barracks are only those employed in surveys.

Some six years ago, both in Monkey Point and King's Bank, a cook used to be supplied to cook food for the workmen whilst they were away on duty. We suggest that for every 20 men one cook should be provided. The same system of supplying cook is adopted in other companies, such as Irrawaddy Flotilla Co., Ltd., etc., and also in Rice Mills.

With regard to small steam launches and motor launches no cooks are supplied. We suggest that cook should be supplied in every launch.

*Doctor.*—The Port Commissioners provide Doctor. There is no first-aid material on the launches. We suggest that first-aid material should be kept in all launches.

The Doctor's office is at the Port Commissioners' office. He never visits launches or barracks, even if an employee is seriously ill. The employee has to be brought down from the launch to the Doctor.

We suggest that the Doctor should pay at least weekly visits to the barracks and look after the health of the workers. In cases of serious illness of employees on launches, the Doctor should visit on the launch. A further complaint is that the workers are not easily admitted to the Doctors' office unless they have a letter from the Department. The Doctor should be approachable at all times.

*Launchmen.—Hours of work.*—Classes (a) and (b) have to remain on their launches for 24 hours continuously. They have to be in readiness to go out at any time of day and night. They get no off time in the day, nor do they get Sundays nor Fridays for their prayers, nor any holiday for *Id* days and they enjoy no Government holiday whatsoever.

They work from 6 to 12 hours in a day, and even have to work at night also as extra.

Formerly, in the Fire Boats, fire allowances were given for night work, but now that has been cancelled.

About 9 steamers are working night and day and for these double shift crew should be maintained.

Arrangements should be made to give at least one day holiday in the week and Government holidays, and *Id* days should also be given as holidays. On recognised holidays, if any launch is required for urgent work, the employees should receive overtime wages.

*Workers compensation.*—Employees on the inland vessels do not come under the Workmen's Compensation Act. In cases of accidents causing death, permanent disablement or temporary disablement, they are given some sort of bonus.

We suggest that employees on inland vessels should also be brought under the Workmen's Compensation Act.

Wages.—

	Present.		Recommended.	
	Wages.	Annual Increment.	Wages.	Annual Increment.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Serang, Junior grade .. ..	45—65	2 0 0	45—85	3 0 0
Serang, Senior Grade .. ..	65—150	5 0 0	..	..
Sukani .. ..	30—35	..	35—45	2 8 0
Khalasis, 3rd Grade .. ..	20, 24 or 28	..	25—35	2 0 0
Maistry, Junior .. ..	45—65	2 0 0	45—85	3 0 0
Maistry, Senior .. ..	65—150	5 0 0	..	..
Tindal, Junior .. ..	30	..	} 35—45	2 8 0
Tindal, Senior .. ..	35	..		
Fireman, Junior .. ..	25	..	} 25—35	2 0 0
Fireman, Senior .. ..	30	..		
<b>SURVEYOR'S STAFF.</b>				
<i>King's Bank.</i>				
Leadman .. ..	35	..	35—45	1 0 0
Tindal .. ..	30	..	30—40	1 0 0
Khalasis .. ..	24	..	24—30	1 0 0
Sampanwallah .. ..	25	..	25—30	1 0 0
<i>Monkey Point.</i>				
Leadman .. ..	35 plus 5 Allowance.	..	40—50	2 0 0
Tindal .. ..	40 plus 5 Allowance.	..	45—55	2 0 0
Junior Khalasis .. ..	24 or 26	..	..	..
Senior Khalasis .. ..	28 with 5 Allowance.	..	24—25	1 0 0

Payment.—Payment is made direct to the workmen.

*Other Deductions.*—The Serangs and Maistries are fined for any delay in starting the launch when ordered.

Others are fined for quarrelling with superior officers. The fines amount to the extent of 1 to 5 days wages, which, if it is submitted, is very heavy.

*Period of Payment.*—They receive their wages within the 15th of next month.

93. Serangs and Maistries receive Provident Fund. Provident Fund is meant only for those who passed the stage of Rs. 65 salary. The Provident Fund formerly included all those who received Rs. 30 per month as wages and it is suggested that the Provident Fund should include all workmen.

*Bonus.*—Formerly an employee who had 15 years service received one month's salary for each year. Now this rule has been changed and only half the amount is given.

*Leave Rules.*—Formerly three years service entitled a man to 8 months leave without pay. Now three years service entitles a man to three months leave with pay and two months without pay for all classes. If, however, an employee continues service without leave beyond three years and works for six years, his leave is the same as if he had worked for three years. Sick leave, within three years, is not given even without pay. For private reasons also no leave is granted.

*Senior Serangs and Senior Engineers.*—Three years service entitles them to four months leave with pay and if on medical certificate on half pay is granted. We suggest that in the junior class leave on medical certificate and for private purposes should be granted without pay. With regard to the cases of higher or lower senior and junior grade and other class of men, who will be on leave, if unable to return through reasons of illness, medical certificates if countersigned by Civil Surgeons are not accepted and services are dispensed with. We suggest that in all such cases leave without pay should be given. Some employees from junior and senior grades and other classes who served for six or seven years when they ask for leave receive it after great deal of trouble and long delay.

**Promotion.**—When a post of higher grade is vacant the next grade man is not promoted to that vacancy, but outside man is generally employed. Formerly there was a rule that the junior should be promoted in place of senior vacated. We suggest that this rule should be re-introduced and strictly followed.

**Semaphore Station.**—Comprising of—1. Serang. 2. Tindal. 3. Khalasis receiving salaries of Rs. 40, Rs. 35 and Rs. 24 respectively, were receiving Rs. 2 as allowance for the last two years. This allowance has been stopped. They get no holidays whatsoever. We suggest that their salaries should be raised according to the other grades, and should also get weekly holidays, and holidays on *Id* days, and on days of Government holidays, if employed, should receive overtime pay.

**Trade Disputes.**—Petitions with regard to grievances are not taken any notice of.

#### IV.—Memorandum of the Rice Mill Engine Room Labour.

I. **Recruitment.**—3. (i) Labour comes voluntary from Chittagong. They are selected for employment locally.

4. They leave their families behind.

7. (i) There is some amount of unemployment.

III. **Housing.**—16. (i) In European Mills generally in Rangoon six men are lodged in a room 10 ft. by 20 ft. but in Bulloch Bros. Seikgyi Mill in a room of 30 ft. by 20 ft. 45 men are accommodated. In Mills in outside Rangoon accommodation is unsatisfactory.

No separate quarters for married men are provided; a partition being put up for the purpose.

**Kitchen.**—Generally in European and some other mills kitchen accommodation is satisfactory; however in many mills owned by non-Europeans and in some European mills kitchen accommodation is not satisfactory, being too limited.

**General condition of barracks.**—In the majority of the case, they are not kept in proper repairs.

**Latrine.**—In most of the mills the latrines are of open type, *i.e.*, without doors and therefore there is no privacy. We suggest that latrines should be separate for the superior labour staff.

In Kanaungto and Dalla mills and mills outside of Rangoon the latrines are often situated on the creeks and are very far off from the barracks. This causes a great deal of inconvenience during the rainy season. The space between the barracks and the latrine is generally under water or swampy and persons have to wade through. It is suggested that the road to the latrine should be high.

The latrines are generally cleaned once in 24 hours. We suggest that latrines should be cleaned 4 times a day, and that each industrial concern with over 100 labourers should have a sweeper on the staff.

**Water.**—Provision of water in No. 5 Rice Mill, Seikgyi is not sufficient.

**Surroundings of barracks.**—Except in large concerns the surrounding area is swampy or under water. We suggest that the areas surrounding the barracks must be so drained or raised so that water may not accumulate.

IV. **Health.**—24. In Bulloch Bros. Rice Mill a doctor and a dispensary is provided; in Steel Bros., Rice Mill a doctor is appointed, but labourers have to pay the doctor.

**Leave.**—If such doctor gives a medical certificate, no pay is out during sick leave. If however this doctor proves unsatisfactory and the labourer goes to any other doctor even better qualified, his certificate is not accepted. In the smaller rice mills no provision is made for medical relief, and as a rule no sick leave with pay is granted. The tindals and sircars are allowed leave without pay and passage in the Big Mills. The lower grades are not given such leave. In the small mills no such leave is granted.

VII. **Safety.**—In Burma it is not necessary to employ engineers in mills. The owner is responsible for "safety", consequently there is not sufficient "safety" for boiler workers. In a recent case in No. 26 Mill at Dalla, five employees while working at the boiler were scalded, out of whom 4 died. The owner was fined Rs. 75. The tindal was uncertificated. We suggest that in all mills engineers should be employed and they should be responsible for the safety of the employees.

Because mill owners have been made responsible for safety, they select uncertificated tindals who can be engaged at a lower rate of pay. During boiler cleaning sufficient time for cooling down is not allowed by such mill owners and consequently men have to work under very distressing circumstances. For the supply of water, very often mechanical arrangements are not made for pumping in the water. Accidents occur because of this deficiency. In many mills complaint is made that the men working at the boilers are very much troubled by the husk from the mill flying towards the boiler side.

In the big mills "first aid" is given.

48. In the small mills even materials are not always kept.

IX. *Hours*.—(i) In the large mills twelve hours are worked with 2 hours interval. (ii) With regard to "overtime" the day is counted on a 9-hour basis but overtime is paid only for hours worked more than 12 hours and for such overtime the pay is calculated on a 9-hour day. In small mills, there is no fixed hours of work nor of overtime. Complaint is made that small mills in the districts work without stoppage for many hours.

XII. *Wages*.—With regard to wages, we have to state that in 1920 there was a strike and wages were then increased. Since then no wages have been increased. In fact in some of the big and small mills wages have been decreased. In some of the big mills where, say, the tindal was getting Rs. 80 per month on his going on leave the second man is promoted to his place, but the same pay is not given. Thus gradually the wages of the post are decreased. Similar method is adopted with regard to the other staff.

We suggest that when a worker goes on leave he should have a lien on his post. We also suggest that a system be introduced by which all workers may be able to get an increase through length of service and efficiency. This would induce the workers to remain in an establishment instead of wanting to jump from place to place to improve their prospects. They have no interest in the establishment they are working in.

Payment.—In some mills there is a system to pay the workers through the tindal. We believe this system does lead to corruption in most mills. We suggest that all workmen should be paid direct by the employer.

Prevailing Wages—

	Rs.	Rs.
Tindal .. .. .	..	..
Engine Tindal .. .. .	..	..
Rice men and Bolier men .. .. .	..	..
Oilman .. .. .	..	..
Khalasis .. .. .	..	..
Sircar .. .. .	..	..
Assistant Sircar .. .. .	..	..
Weighing man .. .. .	..	..
	gets from	40 to 60 per month.
	40	60
	25	30
	25	27
	20	23
	35	110
	30	40
	30	32

107. (ii) In the big mills payments are regular, being paid within 45 days. In the small mills there is a constant and growing complaint that employers do not pay workers within 45 days. In fact in many cases wages are not paid for months necessitating borrowing at high rate of interest.

IX. 61. *Day of Rest*.—No day of rest is given in many of the mills. Muslim workers' complaint is that time for prayers is not given.

Blind Alley.—Men working for 30 or 40 years in big rice mills reach Rs. 70—80 per month. But they are not given increase over this.

XV. In 1920 there was a strike. The cause and settlement is attached herewith.

XIV. There is no trades union. The engine room workers are mostly members of the Labour Association. Employers generally do not like workers to join any association.

**V.—Principal Port Office, Launch service.**

I. 5. The workers come voluntarily from Chittagong.

They are selected in Rangoon.

4. They leave their families behind.

II. Workers.—

(a) 1. Serang. 2. Sukani (Assistant to Serang in ships). 3. Khalasis or Lascars.

(b) 1. Maistry. 2. Tindal (in ships). 3. Fireman or stoker.

There is unemployment. There is waiting list also.

III. *Housing Provision*.—Employed about 1,300.—(a) No housing is provided. They live either in the launch or in the ship. Workers, during their time of the employment, necessarily have no house provided for them, when, therefore, they proceed on leave and are unable to get an immediate ship to proceed, they have to find accommodation and pay for same. Similarly when they return from leave, very often they have to wait for some days before they can take up a post, they find it difficult with regard to staying in the meantime.

In other Companies like Irrawaddy Flotilla Co., Ltd. etc., provision is made for housing accommodation for temporary usage, and it is suggested that similar housing accommodation may be provided to the workers of the Port Principal.

(b) The general custom with the Irrawaddy Flotilla Co., Ltd., and B. O. C. is that in launches in which 5 to 6 peoples are employed a cook is provided. In the Port Principal for such launches

no cook is provided and the workers have to cook their food after their work is finished. It is suggested that a cook be provided in such cases.

IV. *Health*.—Medical facilities.—For every ailment the workers are sent to hospital. There is no medical aid provided for them.

It is suggested that for all ships and launches in port a doctor should be provided who should inspect the workers at least once a week and to whom sick persons may be able to go when in port.

VI. *Safety*.—No first-aid material is provided on any launch except in ships. We suggest that in all launches a complete outfit for first-aid should be provided.

VII. *Workers Compensation*.—The workers under this class do not enjoy the benefits of the Workmen's Compensation Act. It is suggested that the class be brought under that Act.

*Wages*.—For serang, with third class certificates, the salary commences from Rs. 40 plus Rs. 2-8-0 to Rs. 65 per month.

For serang, with second class certificate, the salary begins with Rs. 40 plus Rs. 2-8-0 rising to Rs. 80.

A third grade serang can pass his second class examination and become a second class serang. The second grade serang is not permitted to pass his first grade examination.

Indians are not allowed to take their first class examination.

We suggest that there should be no bar for passing first class examination.

*Maistries*.—For first class, the pay is Rs. 40 to Rs. 80 with Rs. 2-8-0 yearly increment.

For second class, the pay is Rs. 40 to Rs. 65 with Rs. 2-8-0 yearly increment.

Men with greatest experience are blocked and are not given any chance in ships for which they would be quite suitable after long service in launches.

They are not permitted to appear for the examination which would qualify them for Engineers. Indians are not allowed to sit for Engineers' examination.

*Payment*.—The system of payment is unsatisfactory. In some launches payments are regularly made within 45 days, but in other launches it takes longer. The payment depends upon the clerk of the launch.

We suggest that strict rules be framed for the payment of wages within 45 days in all launches.

*Other deductions*.—(a) The employment on return from leave, is left mainly to the clerks and therefore workers are kept on the waiting list too long. Employment on return from leave promotion, and continuation should be managed by a high officer. We suggest that these matters be not left in the hands of clerks, and for such purposes superior officers should be in charge.

92. There is a good deal of indebtedness which cannot be traced to legitimate requirements. It is suggested Government should help in forming a co-operative banking with regard to employees in the Port Principal.

93. Serangs, Maistries, Tindals and Sukanis are entitled to pension on retirement. Khalasis do not receive any pension. Some buckshish is paid to them. There is no definite rule of bonus.

XIV. There are no trade unions. They are members of the Burma Labour Association.

In 1920, in Mandalay, a strike took place, but in Rangoon when notice was given of a strike, there was a settlement effected in the meantime. The cause of strike and settlement are herewith affixed.

*General*.—With regard to promotion. A man starting on Rs. 40 would, in the usual course, reach the grade of Rs. 80 in 16 years. After that there is no chance of any increment to his salary.

We therefore suggest that the salary should be raised, for the first ten years, by Rs. 3 and for the second 10 years by Rs. 5 reaching Rs. 120. With regard to the second grade serangs and engine drivers the salary should be from Rs. 40 to Rs. 90, the increment being Rs. 2-8-0 per year. Tindals and Sukanis' salaries should be from Rs. 30 to Rs. 40. The tindals should be promoted to maistry and sukanis to serang, subject to passing their examination. Khalasis' wages should be raised from Rs. 20 to Rs. 30 by Re. 1 per year, and they should be, according to seniority and fitness, promoted to sukanis. As regards firemen, the salary should be raised from Rs. 22 to Rs. 32 by yearly increment of Re. 1 and should be promoted to tindal. The services of Khalasis and firemen should be made permanent.

*Holidays*.—They receive no holidays on Sundays nor on any other Government holidays. Even on *Id* days, which are two great Muslim festivals, no holidays are given. We suggest that Sundays and other holidays should be given to them, or when on urgent work a launch has to be used that service on such holidays be counted as overtime.

*Allowance*.—With regard to motor launches, the motor drivers were given Rs. 5, 10, 15 and 20 respectively extra. In the month of June 1930, suddenly, without any information, these allowances were cut down by Rs. 5.

*Grade of Motor Drivers.*—The Motor Driver's grade was from Rs. 40 to Rs. 65. First grade from Rs. 40 to Rs. 80. The grade of Rs. 40 to Rs. 80 has been reduced to Rs. 40 to Rs. 65.

*Transfers.*—Men are too often, and as it seems unnecessarily so, transferred from launch<sup>h</sup> to launch. These launches may be in a different part of the province. It is suggested that transfers should be managed by a higher officer.

## VI.—Government Dockyard, Dawbong.

Burmese and Indian and Chinese temporary labour approximately 400 unknown.

*Recruitment in Rangoon.*—Work—(a) Blacksmith, (b) Turner, (c) Viceman, (d) Boiler-maker, (e) Carpenter, (f) Foundry.

*Unemployment.*—Depends upon the work in the works. If there is less work temporary men are dispensed with. If there is work they are at once recruited.

*Housing.*—Temporary men are not given housing. Some few men may have housing provided. Some temporary maistries may be given housing. There are six rooms for six maistries with latrines. There are large barracks, made of timber. Family quarters are about 10 feet square, with kitchen. General latrines have to be used. Latrines for men and women are separate. Latrines are about 200 feet away. No rent is charged.

*Water.*—Water was laid only on the six maistry rooms this year. There are nine cooly barracks. One tap is given for a barrack. This is not sufficient. The water tank is small, and so water is not available, at all times. However, those living in the dockyard lines do get some water, but those who have to live outside get no water, as there is no pipe line laid there. Bathing water has to be obtained from rain water tanks, but drinking water has to be brought from the dockyard taps. But as the dockyard tank is small, very often no water is available. At least workers of the dockyard should be able to get water freely.

*Health.*—There is a doctor, and men receive good medical attendance.

*Maternity.*—No medical aid is provided.

*Hours of work.*—From 6-30 a.m. to 10 a.m.

12 Noon to 5 p.m.

Sunday is closed and pay is cut for the day.

*Overtime.*—Formerly when overtime was worked, men were paid at the rate of 5 hours for 4 hours worked. This rule has now been cancelled, and the same rate as day work is paid. We request that overtime be  $1\frac{1}{2}$  times that of day wages.

Public Holidays are observed, but pay is cut for the day.

Vacancy in permanent staff is filled up from those working. There are: (1) Boiler Department, (2) Turner, (3) Blacksmith Shops, (4) Foundry, (5) Carpenter, (6) Vicemen, (7) Painter, (8) Carpenter, (9) Motorshop. In all these departments only three men are permanent, i.e., (1) Filter Maistry, (2) Boilerman Maistry, (3) Carpenter Maistry, (4) Motorshop Maistry. All the other workers are on the temporary lists, and are treated as casual labour. Therefore, (a) if an hour or two leave is taken, no pay for that provided is given. (b) If we are sick we receive no pay. (c) We have no leave pay. (d) No pension or bonus is paid to us. And yet there are men who have been working in this factory from the time the Government has taken it over.

*Wages.*—All wages are paid on daily basis. Because of this system rates of wages have been reduced. During the general strike in 1920, rates were increased, and specific rates were fixed for different works. Now this rule is no longer observed. For instance, boiler maker was on Rs. 2-0-6 pies per day, now he is paid no fixed pay, but Rs. 1-12 or Rs. 1-8 is paid. We request that the rates which were formerly fixed should now be strictly adhered to.

*Permanent and Temporary.*—We request that a larger staff or permanent hands be maintained, as it is most difficult for us to live in this uncertain manner. All the staff above the maistries is permanent: we do not see why the poor workmen alone should bear all the burden of unemployment. We request that at least those of us who have worked for five years, the same rules should apply with regards to leave rules. Men with ten years' service must be made permanent.

## VII.—Service in Launches used on the Rangoon River for towing of Cargo boats, and other Riverine Work.

*I. Recruitment.*—Labour is recruited by the owners in Rangoon. The workers are Muslims from Chittagong.

*III. Health.*—(24) No medical facilities are provided. No first-aid materials are kept on their launches.

Suggestion (a) Workers on these launches when ill should be given medical aid, or expenses be borne by the employers, and (b) Full set of first-aid materials should be kept on the launches.

*VII. Safety.*—Arrangements are suitable.

*IX. Hours of Work.*—In most cases the practice of the employers is to work fully a few of their launches and keep the rest idle and the crew of those in work have to do extra work night and

day. During the slack season on the river from about August to November, the crew of a portion of the launches is discharged, and the remainder have to bear the brunt of the work. The crew not required is discharged summarily without notice or salary in lieu of notice, in the manner of daily paid workmen, although the men are employed monthly.

Suggestions.—Workers on the launches which have to do night work for more than two nights in the week should have double shift, and if this is not constant, night work should be counted as overtime at double day rates.

*VIII. Workmen's Compensation.*—Workers of riverine launches should come under the Workmen's Compensation Act.

*XII. Wages.*—Although the type of work in all Riverine launches is same, there is a great diversity in wages. Very few men get the opportunity of serving the same master for any length of time because of constant change of crews in many of the launches, and therefore even in concerns where there is a system of increment very few are able to get advantage of the increment.

The wages range from :—

	Rs.	Rs.
Serang .. .. .	40	70 per month.
Sukhani .. .. .	29	34 "
Khalasi .. .. .	21	22 "
Maistry .. .. .	40	75 "
Oilman .. .. .	29	32 "
Fireman .. .. .	27	29 "
Coalman .. .. .	22	" "
Cook .. .. .	16	19 "

Wages in each establishment differ.

Suggestion.—It is necessary that a minimum wage board be appointed to fix the minimum wages for each grade according to the horse power of each launch.

Bonus.—In some concerns a month's wage or part of it is paid as bonus when an employee is going on leave after three or four years' service, but such cases are only in the case of serangs.

*Trade Unions.*—There are none. Most of the workers in this occupation are members of the Labour Association.

*Trade Disputes.*—There was a strike in 1923. They were induced to resume work on the promise that their grievances would be sympathetically considered, but nothing has been done since.

Leave.—They are given leave without pay for any length of time they require.

Service.—Their service must be considered in the manner of those with monthly wages; they must be given one month's notice for discharge; they must get three months' leave with pay for three years of work.

#### THE BURMA INDIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

*Letter from the Secretary, Burma, Indian Chamber of Commerce, dated the 4th September 1930.*

I am directed by the Committee of the Burma Indian Chamber of Commerce to forward hereby their views on the questions before the Royal Commission on Labour in India.

At the outset, I am directed to observe that my Chamber is a body comprising various commercial, industrial and trading interests. Although several of its members are, either individually or collectively, large employers of labour, my Chamber as a body is not in a position to offer criticisms on some of the technical aspects of the questions within the purview of your Commission. The observations of my Chamber will therefore be generally confined to broad principles and questions of general policy in regard to the condition of labour.

Before dealing with the various subjects included in the Schedule issued by the Royal Commission, my Committee desire me to make the general attitude of my Chamber towards labour quite clear. My Chamber welcomes the healthy growth on proper lines of Trade Unions in the country and is always prepared to support all measures, taken either by Government or any other agency, which may tend to ameliorate the conditions of labour. My Chamber is firmly of opinion that the industrial advancement of any country largely depends on the most cordial co-operation between capital and labour and that a contented labour force is the greatest asset for the success of any industrial enterprise. My Chamber is aware that the present condition of labour leaves much to be desired and there is a wide scope for its improvement. My Chamber is therefore glad that the Royal Commission has been appointed "to enquire into and report on the existing conditions of labour in industrial undertakings and plantations in British India, on the health, efficiency and standard of living of the workers, and on the relations between employers and employed, and to make recommendations." My Chamber hopes that the Royal Commission will make such recommendations as will tend to benefit labour and the industries

alike. At the same time my Chamber begs to submit that the recommendations of the Commission should not be merely a copy of what has been adopted in the West but should be based on the conditions as they exist in India. It is apprehended that any recommendations which do not take the peculiar conditions of India in regard to her industrial organisation and her labour force fully into account are bound to do more harm than good.

\* Having made these preliminary observations, I am directed to deal with some of the subjects mentioned in the Schedule.

### I.—Recruitment.

1. *Origin of Labour.* (A) *Factory Labour.* Rice milling is the most important industry in Burma, employing a very large labour force. Other factories employing labour on a fairly large scale are saw-mills, oil refineries, match-factories, foundries, Railway and other workshops, etc. All labour employed in the factories, except paddy carriers in the rice-mills, is recruited locally. The paddy carriers are recruited in India.

(B) *Labour employed outside Factories.* Such labour mostly comprises shipping labour, labour employed by public bodies like the Municipal Corporation, Port Trust and the Development Trust, and transport labour. All this labour except labour for landing coal and salt is recruited locally.

(C) *Casual Labour.* This includes rickshaw pullers, hand-cart pullers and sampanwallas. They are all recruited locally. Most of the labour employed in Burma is Indian labour comprising Telugus, Tamils, Chittagonians, Hindustanis, etc. Burmese labour is generally employed for light work, e. g., filling boxes with matches in match factories. Chinese labour is also employed on a small scale. The main reason why Indian labour has to be employed is that trained Burmese labour has so far not been sufficiently available. Even the Burmese employers have to depend on Indian labour because it is trained and efficient. It will be obvious that labour recruited in India is comparatively very small. It is estimated that out of about 3 lacs labourers, about 25,000 are recruited in India.

3. *Methods of Recruitment.*—The various methods of recruitment have been fully described in the "Report of an Enquiry into the Standard and Cost of Living of the Working Classes in Rangoon," by Mr. J. J. Bennison, B.A., I.C.S., Officer-in-Charge, Labour Statistics Bureau, Burma, 1928. (Paragraphs 181 and 182.) My Chamber therefore does not propose to go over the ground again in this memorandum.

It will be seen from the Report referred to above that most of the labour is recruited through the Maistries, and wages for such labour paid through Maistries. Such labour remains indefinitely indebted to the Maistries and has grievances as regards the manner in which loans are recovered by the Maistries and that of payment of wages through the Maistries. The existing methods therefore require improvement. My Chamber thinks that although it is difficult to make any drastic changes in the present system at a stroke, the establishment of official agencies not only for recruitment but also for looking after the welfare of labour would be a welcome step. It also suggests that an Indian Labour Commissioner, who must be a nominee of the Government of India, should be posted in Burma to look after the interests of Indian labour and he should keep in close touch with those provinces from which such labour emigrates.

4. *Extent and effects of disturbance of family life.*—Most of the Indian labourers, who are married, leave their wives behind and for unmarried labourers, there is a paucity of Indian girls of marriageable age. The result is a serious disturbance of family life which naturally leads to moral degradation of both married and unmarried labourers.

7. *Unemployment.*—Unemployment would appear to be widespread among literate and educated classes as well as among manual labourers.

Unemployment among the former is due to the fact that there are not sufficient openings for such persons, which is further aggravated by the present depression in trade and industries all round. The scope of employment in Government service is very limited and the legal and medical professions are overcrowded.

Unemployment among the labouring classes is due to the policy of Government in regard to indigenous industries, which do not receive as much assistance and encouragement from them as they legitimately should. The general trade depression throughout the country is further responsible for such unemployment. It is also due to displacement of labour on a large scale by the introduction of mechanical devices. If, however, such mechanical devices could be manufactured in the country the labour displaced by their introduction could be employed for the manufacture of such devices.

For alleviating and remedying distress caused by unemployment my Chamber is of opinion that Government should (a) encourage indigenous industries by all possible methods; (b) provide suitable arrangements for technical education in skilled trades; (c) adopt a liberal policy in regard to the employment of the sons of the soil in Government Service; (d) provide facilities for cultivating idle lands to those who require such facilities.

### III.—Housing.

The problem providing suitable housing for labour has for some time now engaged the serious attention both of Government and private employers and some steps have been taken to provide such housing. My Chamber however believes that much remains to be done in this direction.

My Chamber may be permitted to point out that although the provision of housing by employers has come to be recognised as desirable it is too much to expect the employers to find the necessary capital and organisation to provide housing for their employees. This would in the opinion of my Chamber, put a heavy burden on the industries concerned, which they are not in a position to bear. My Chamber is therefore glad to note that the Local Government has under consideration a scheme for the provision of chawls for the labour class and for the erection of a rest-house on the foreshore in Rangoon which is proposed to be financed by the imposition of an extra tax of Re. 1 on every male passenger leaving Burma. While offering its views on the proposed scheme, my Chamber has pointed out to the Local Government that although this tax would add to the hardships of the outgoing labourers who are already paying a tax of Rs. 2 per head, in the absence of any suitable alternative source of taxation and in view of the urgency of the problem, my Chamber, with great reluctance, has decided to accept the proposal subject to certain reservations. My Chamber is unable to agree to the suggestion of the Local Government that the Development Trust should be entrusted with the execution of the scheme. It has suggested that (1) a separate Trust should be set up for the purpose of carrying out the proposals and that such Trust should, in view of the purely Indian interest involved, have a majority of Indians on it, with the Director of Public Health, the Health Officer of the Corporation and the Chief Superintendent of the P. W. D. as members and the Chief Inspector of Factories and the Director of Labour Statistics Bureau, as advisors to the Trust; (2) the entire proceeds of the surcharge should be earmarked for the building of houses for labourers; (3) the Trust should make all arrangements with regard to the building and the rents to be paid to the labourers; (4) the income of the Trust should be devoted to the improvement of the labourers, social, moral, physical and educational; (5) Government should make a grant to the Trust, by acquisition or otherwise, of rent-free land for the purpose of building houses in a suitable locality; and (6) the Port Commissioners and the shipping companies should be requested to contribute substantially towards the cost of the rest-house on the foreshore.

### IV.—Health.

In the opinion of my Chamber, the general health conditions of workers is far from satisfactory. Although no separate figures are available of mortality, infant or adult, and of birth-rate among industrial workers, it is safe to presume that the rate of mortality is very high as compared to the birth-rate. This may be more or less due to the working conditions both at work-places and at home, which are not always satisfactory or congenial. It is certainly largely due to want of education among the labouring classes in the elementary rules of hygiene and of cleanliness. Their diet, which may be insufficient and may also be lacking in nutritious elements may also be partly responsible for their bad condition of health. Whatever the reasons may be the fact remains that they are easily susceptible to attacks of diseases like malaria, hook-worm, influenza, cholera, small-pox, etc. Moreover, the disturbance of sex ratio in industrial cities has the most undesirable effect of spreading contagious diseases among the workers.

The medical facilities provided by employers and by Government are not quite satisfactory. Government hospitals and dispensaries are insufficient. Maternity shelters are provided by Infantile Welfare Society, which employs lady doctors. The Corporation of Rangoon also employs lady doctors to inspect houses, schools, etc., and to give general advice to women. Trained midwives are also available but their fees put them out of the reach of the poor classes. Unqualified *dais* are generally dying out.

Medical facilities are generally freely utilised by the workers but there is room for much improvement by the provision of more doctors and by propaganda to teach workers to obey and carry out medical advice properly. My Chamber suggests that Government and the Rangoon Corporation should budget for a far larger expenditure for medical relief. Attempts should also be made to persuade charitably disposed people with ample means to help in this direction.

Sanitary arrangements at work-places and at home are generally satisfactory but the supply of water in Rangoon is inadequate. Outside of Rangoon, better attention needs to be paid to the sterilization of water.

As regards official supervision, my Chamber suggests that the officers concerned should see not only that houses are sanitary but also that the surroundings are sanitary.

### V.—Welfare.

As far as my Chamber is aware, very little is being done for the general welfare of workers either by employers or by Government. Some large employers have provided facilities for

education but looking to the large labour force, they have proved entirely inadequate. No provision is made by employers for old age and premature retirement. No co-operative efforts worth mentioning have yet been made and my Chamber believes that there is a splendid scope for such work because it is perhaps the one way of making labour self-reliant.

#### VI.—Education.

Educational institutions exclusively meant for children of industrial workers and established by employers are very few and no statistics are available as to the actual number of children in such industrial localities. It may be pointed out that industrial labour being mainly Indian and speaking different languages the provision of educational facilities becomes difficult and expensive. As for the education of children employed in factories, there are no special facilities provided except by the Burmah Oil Company and the Burma Railways. For adults, there are no educational institutions run either by employers or Government. There are a few night-schools in Rangoon carried on by public agencies some of which are helped by Government. My Chamber firmly believes that free and compulsory education is the only remedy to improve the present state.

As for industrial and vocational training, Government has opened the following, *viz.*, (1) Training School at Amarapura, (2) Pottery Works at Insein, (3) Laquer-ware School at Insein, (4) Insein Technical Institute for the training of Civil and Mechanical Engineers and (5) Rangoon University Engineering College.

It is obvious that men who have received education are more self-reliant, efficient and understand their responsibilities better than the illiterate workers.

#### IX.—Hours.

Under the present law, labourers cannot be made to work for more than 10 hours a day in factories. This maximum limit has been fixed in pursuance of the First Convention of the First Session of the International Labour Conference, which provided specifically different treatment for Asiatic countries like India, in view of the difference in climate, economic conditions, organisation of industries, etc. It is possible that a demand for a reduction in hours of work will be put forward before the Commission. My Chamber ventures to submit that from an economic point of view, such a demand would hardly be justified unless it were possible to reduce wages or to improve the efficiency of labour substantially. The Commission will doubtless realise that a reduction of wages is hardly feasible. If therefore hours of work are to be reduced without any loss to the industry, efficiency of labour must correspondingly improve. If this happens, my Chamber would heartily support any reasonable reduction in hours of work. There is another factor, which, in the opinion of my Chamber, militates against the reduction of hours. While the advanced industrial countries, which have got a less number of working hours, have got an effective tariff policy for safe-guarding their respective industries, my Chamber regrets to point out that owing to the absence of an effective protective policy and the backward stage of her industries, India at present cannot afford the luxury of short hours without a great blow to her industrial progress. It may further be brought to the notice of the Commission that even some of the advanced countries have not seen their way to ratify the Convention referred to above which India with all the disadvantages has ratified and put into effect. Any further reduction in India under the existing conditions therefore would, to say the least, be premature and prove disastrous to her economic interests.

#### XII.—Wages.

Mr. J. J. Bennison has given in his "Report on the Enquiry into the Standard and Cost of Living of the Working Classes in Rangoon," incomes of labourers in different industries. My Chamber desires to point out however that the incomes are unduly exaggerated because they are calculated for the whole month on the basis of the daily wages. Mr. Bennison has not taken into account the very important fact that employment in industries is not continuous. In rice mills, for instance, paddy carriers and rice bag carriers get regular and continuous employment only during certain months, erratic work during a few months and no work at all for some months. As regards coal and salt carriers, Stevedore labourers get on an average about 10 days' work per month, while the wharf labourers get about 20 days' work. The same is the case with agricultural labour. This accounts for the low standard of living and poverty of the working classes in spite of the high rates of wages which have come to stay since the post-war period. My Chamber requests the Commission to examine this factor very closely as it seriously affects not only the workers but also the general well-being of the country. The unemployment of a large number of able-bodied men, willing and able to work but forced to remain idle for want of employment, means a tremendous waste of human energy and an irreparable and incalculable loss to the material wealth of the country.

No bonus is paid to factory labour except to paddy carriers in rice mills. No system of profit-sharing is in existence.

### XIII.—Industrial Efficiency of Workers.

My Chamber is of opinion that as compared with a generation ago, efficiency of Indian labour has much improved but there is a considerable leeway to be made up before it can attain the standard of efficiency of workmen in the Western countries.

It is rather difficult to compare the productive efficiency of Indian with that of foreign labour because in doing so, account must be taken of the influence of factory environments in different countries and proper allowance should be made for the advantage of mechanical appliances available to the workers. My Chamber is of opinion that the sanitary requirements of factories enforced by law at present have yielded positive results with regard to the health and physique of the workers. It begs to point out, however, that the majority of workers, due mainly to ignorance, are generally addicted to drinking alcohol and consumption of narcotic drugs. This seriously affects their health and consequently their efficiency. Moreover, any monetary advantage given to them in the shape of higher wages or bonuses tends to stimulate these injurious habits instead of its being utilised to raise their standard of living or to any other good account. My Chamber has therefore definitely come to the conclusion that no measure for improving the general condition of labour will be so effective as the enforcement of free elementary education. My Chamber also considers it essential to prohibit the consumption of alcohol and narcotic drugs by law for the amelioration of the condition of the labouring classes.

### XIV.—Trade Combinations.

The Trade Union movement in Burma has up till now not developed at all. Most of the Trade Associations came into existence mainly as a result of some specific grievance followed by a strike. But as soon as the strike was over, the Association concerned became almost defunct. My Chamber believes that this unsatisfactory state of affairs is due to the general illiteracy of workmen, who are unable to appreciate the benefits of organised efforts on proper lines. My Chamber would welcome the formation of genuine Trade Unions on sound and healthy lines because they would conduce to the mutual benefit of the employers and the employed. The present position militates against the interests of the industries and labour alike because strikes are declared *at random* without notice resulting in a colossal economic loss. The employers are generally quite unprepared for the emergency and at times are even unaware of the grievances, which have brought about the strike. It is also difficult for them to negotiate for a settlement as there is no recognised authority on the side of labour. Hence, if recognised Trade Unions are in existence the difficulties mentioned above would disappear and industries would be saved from unnecessary losses which hit the employers and employees alike. My Chamber considers it most essential that Trade Unions should be run and managed by the workers themselves although it does not object to assistance being rendered by outsiders for a temporary period. Only when Unions are run and managed by workers themselves, a true sense of responsibility would dawn upon them.

### XV.—Industrial Disputes.

The chief cause of strikes has generally been either a demand for higher wages or a demand for overtime and strike-pay. Sympathetic strikes also take place. Some of these have been of a long duration. They have been generally settled by an understanding between the employers and the employees and Government have as a rule remained silent spectators. But it may be pointed out that in the recent shipping strike, which was followed by serious rioting, Government had to intervene and appoint a Conciliation Board under the Trade Disputes Act.

The loss to industries and workers as a result of a strike depends upon its duration but in some cases it has been colossal.

In this connection, my Chamber begs to invite the special attention of the Commission to the fact that in this country, lightning strikes are frequent because, due to their illiteracy and ignorance, workmen are prone to be easily misled. This, my Chamber believes, is injurious not only to the interests of the industries concerned but also to those of the workmen themselves. Labour should therefore be made to realise that its own interests and those of the industries are identical and inter-dependent. It is obvious that its claim for the betterment of its condition would have a much stronger moral as well as material basis when it is sufficiently educated to evince due regard to the preservation and progress of the industry.

My Chamber is of opinion that some suitable machinery should be instituted to intervene and to examine issues before a strike takes place. It would leave the Commission to decide what such machinery should be having regard to the peculiar conditions obtaining in the country. But as a temporary measure, my Chamber suggests that a standing Conciliation Board should be constituted and further that a panel should be formed of representatives of capital and labour. Whenever any trouble between employers and labour is apprehended the Conciliation Board, assisted by one or two representatives each of capital and labour selected from the panel, must intervene at the earliest opportunity in order to bring about a settlement.

### XVII.—Administration.

It appears to my Chamber that industries being under the divided control of the Central and Provincial Governments, questions affecting industries and labour have been considered rather spasmodically. The Central Legislature, where vital questions affecting industries are discussed and decided, suffers from inadequate representation of industrial interests while the Local Government, conscious of the limited extent of their authority and responsibility, are not inclined to give as much attention to such questions as they legitimately deserve. My Chamber is therefore inclined to suggest that the relations between the Central and Provincial Governments in this respect should be re-adjusted. The industrial and commercial interests should be allowed to have a larger representation in the Central Legislature or if this is not possible, the Provincial Legislature should have a greater control over industrial matters with a more adequate representation of interests affected.

### XVIII.—Intelligence.

At present an index of the cost of living of labourers is published by the Director of Statistics and Labour Commissioner, Burma. My Chamber considers this quite inadequate, and it suggests fuller and more comprehensive compilation of labour statistics and statistics of prices of commodities for working classes and all other data which will help to secure better understanding of this issues by the employers and the employees. My Chamber would insist on greater co-operation between the Government and associations of employers and labour for the compilation of accurate statistics.

Before concluding, I am directed to invite the special attention of the Commission to one or two points which my Chamber considers of utmost importance. My Chamber submits that the action taken by Government during the last few years in respect of questions relating to labour appears to be one-sided in that while they have been too eager to give effect to the Conventions and Recommendations of the International Labour Conference, they have been slow to a fault in extending legitimate protection to any industry when such intervention was obviously called for. Their indifferent attitude towards the interests of indigenous industries is well-known. The Commission will doubtless realize that if the condition of labour is to be permanently improved the weakness of India's industrial position must be duly recognised and suitable steps must be promptly taken to remedy this defect. It is obvious that any measures adopted for the general improvement of labour impose an additional burden on the industries which all of them may not necessarily be in a position to bear. My Chamber therefore feels that whenever such measures are adopted, it should be open to any industry to prefer its case for special protection. The present policy of Government which passes under the name of "discriminating protection" is quite inadequate and even under this policy, Government have been found too slow to act and sometimes do not act at all. My Chamber would advocate the adoption of a national economic policy under which interests of the country as a whole should be considered. An immediate relief granted to an industry at the first sign of difficulty arising from increased burden as a result of labour legislation or from any other causes such as subsidised or unfair competition from abroad, is of vital importance to interests of labour itself as it saves the industry from weakness or extinction and thus maintains full scope for the employment of labour. Further my Chamber begs to suggest that any legislation in the interests of labour should not be initiated by Government without definite information as to whether such legislation has been adopted by other countries; and when it has been discovered that it has not been adopted by certain countries, whose products are imported into India, the tariff barriers against such products should be definitely raised. This measure, if adopted, would prove beneficial to labour itself, which shares the fortunes of an industry in which it is employed.

Lastly, my Chamber would like to repeat and emphasise that employment in India is not continuous and hence earnings of labour are inadequate. This factor accounts for their low standard of living and their extreme poverty. The Commission will realise that unemployment of a large human force for a fairly long period is a huge economic waste from the point of view not only of such unemployed workers but also from that of the country as a whole. My Chamber hopes that the Commission will carefully look into this aspect and suggest suitable steps to remedy this evil.

My Chamber is prepared, if called upon, to depute representatives to give oral evidence and the most convenient place for the purpose is Rangoon.

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### BURMA CORPORATION LIMITED.

In the belief that it may prove useful to members of the Royal Commission upon their forthcoming visit to Namtu, the following synopsis of the activities of the Burma Corporation and of the conditions of employment it affords, has been prepared. There has not been time nor has it been thought desirable to use any elaboration and, consequently, the information given is almost entirely confined to plain statements of fact.

## I

The Bawdwin Mine upon which the whole industry conducted by the Burma Corporation is founded is probably, with one exception, the largest individual silver, lead, zinc deposit within the British Empire, while it is true to say that no other known large deposit contains ore of such high average grade.

In the early years of the 15th century, it was known and worked by the ancient Chinese who confined themselves to the extraction of silver which could be readily transported back to their own dominions. It was undoubtedly used by them as a penal settlement and it was not abandoned as such until the outbreak of the prolonged Panthay rebellion which devastated Western China from 1855 to 1873.

Not until 1901 did the deposit, as represented by slag dumps left by the Chinese, attract further attention nor was the first Company formed to obtain a lease and to develop it until 1907. From that date until the present Corporation was registered in 1919, there is a long and absorbing history of great difficulty and high endeavour which, for the present purposes, need not be detailed.

In 1919-1920 the foundations of a comprehensive programme of construction and development were laid, and that programme has been followed consistently ever since.

The output of metals has steadily expanded as the following figures will show:—

	Silver (ozs.)	Lead (tons).	Zinc Concentrates (tons).	Copper Matte (tons).
1919 .. .. .	2,164,856	18,534		
1921 .. .. .	3,540,812	33,694		
1922 .. .. .	4,191,819	39,213		
1923 (6 months.	2,266,874	21,654		
1924 .. .. .	5,114,721	47,109	12,364	2,340
1925 .. .. .	5,049,328	48,514	17,332	5,206
1926 .. .. .	5,216,102	51,270	33,643	9,869
1927 .. .. .	5,088,042	56,791	54,287	12,141
1928 .. .. .	6,926,901	72,388	62,195	12,388
1929 .. .. .	7,347,333	78,716	60,180	10,719
1930 .. .. .	7,254,780	79,267	58,335	12,904

That a production of such dimensions should have a continuously important bearing upon State revenues and upon conditions of employment over a wide area is self-evident.

The following figures taken for the year ending 30th June 1930 give a fair summary of some of the direct payments made by the Corporation to the Government and to public authorities upon various accounts:—

	Rs.
Income and Super Tax .. .. .	31,86,587
Royalties .. .. .	4,20,327
Police .. .. .	57,110
Burma Railways .. .. .	44,49,150
Port of Rangoon .. .. .	5,40,000
Thathameda Tax .. .. .	1,41,815
Customs .. .. .	2,15,000
Silver Excise Duty .. .. .	5,28,055

During the same period the number of workpeople employed directly in all departments which include Forest and Iron Ore areas widely separated from Namtu was about 15,000, whilst a much larger number depended indirectly as dependents of employees, as traders or as agriculturists upon the activities of the Corporation. It will no doubt be of interest to know that the total wages disbursed last year amounted to Rs. 1,22,11,412.

## II

It is impossible to read any of the earlier published reports issued by the Corporation without being impressed by the regularity with which the absence of an adequate and sufficiently permanent labour force is stressed. Indeed that was the major difficulty of the earlier years of pioneering and development, and not until 1924 can it be said that it was effectually overcome.

It is necessary in the first place to understand that there is an entire absence of suitable indigenous labour. The Shans do not in any degree adapt themselves to regular industrial employment. They are fundamentally an agricultural people, and their necessities have not as yet compelled them to seek other modes of life.

It can truly be said that the whole effective working population comes to Namtu and Bawdwin of its own accord over great distances of land and sea attracted by the conditions of employment which are known to offer in those industrial centres.

The principal areas from which our labour comes are the contiguous Chinese province of Yunnan and, in India, the districts of Gharwal and Orissa, while there are many employees who come from such widely separated areas as the Chinese Shan States, the Punjab and the Madras Presidency. Comparatively few Burmans have offered themselves for employment outside the Forest areas.

The proportion of men from these several districts is constantly varying owing, in India, to economic conditions and, in China, to kaleidoscopic political changes, but there is a gratifying tendency for the labour force constantly to increase both in efficiency and in permanence, a sure token that the conditions of employment are generally regarded as favourable. The steps taken to bring about the present happy state of affairs were to send small expeditions both to China and to India in order to give publicity to the fact that a large programme of development was in progress and that there was a prospect of a large measure of employment; simultaneously new housing and hospital accommodation of an up-to-date pattern was provided, together with a series of provision stores from which men could obtain their requirements cheaply and without recourse to the money-lender. These expeditions took place in the period 1922—1924. The real problem is now to regulate the supply of men to accord with the work in hand, and it not infrequently occurs that great difficulty is experienced in finding employment for bodies of men who may have travelled hundreds of miles to secure it.

Letters have been received from Chinese officials which show how reliant the Chinese in their districts have become upon securing regular work at Namtu and how concerned they are when the annual programme cannot accommodate the numbers who intend to present themselves.

The prevalence of the family system is an interesting feature; both amongst Indians and Chinamen. It is the common practice for one member of a family working under the Corporation to await the arrival of another to relieve him before he himself makes his periodical visit to his home. The system is a good one for it means continual access of skill and efficiency, as well as a continuous flow of earnings into the family exchequer.

### III

It is necessary then to examine the actual conditions of employment in the Corporation's areas which continue to attract so large a number of workpeople; wages; housing, all of it rent free; facilities for obtaining food and necessaries; sanitation; adequate water supply; hospital accommodation and facilities for recreation. Upon the subject of these general amenities very little need be said, because the Commissioners will have ample opportunity for personal inspection and will be able to observe for themselves that it has never been the policy of the Corporation to spare available money to provide all reasonable requirements.

The Asiatic Hospital which caters for the Corporation's own employees, as well as for the surrounding area in return for a small contribution from Government, will be open for inspection. The Stores and the Time Office may also be visited and their systems of working explained.

The Asiatic Clubs which have been established by the Corporation are also worthy of special mention: they are most efficiently conducted by the members themselves and have amply fulfilled the highest expectations formed by the Management at their inception.

As regards the rates and method of payment of wages, the Management will also be pleased to supply the fullest information. The greatest care has always been exercised to insure that wages are paid promptly and that his rate of pay and conditions of employment are understood by the individual employee.

The contract system is largely employed both at Bawdwin and at Namtu, and there are a number of experienced contractors of long service under the Corporation who command its confidence as well as that of the workpeople themselves. That these contractors experience no difficulty in securing men to work for them is the surest proof of their fair dealing and of the fact that the men generally do at least as well as they would do as daily labourers in which capacity they could alternatively find employment.

In the existing circumstances it is quite certain that any contractor who failed in his obligations to his men would so far forfeit their confidence and that of the Corporation as to deprive himself of all future prospects of securing work.

As with daily labourers, so with men working under contract, wages are paid promptly and to the men individually without the intervention of any intermediary. There is no evidence whatever that contractors prey upon their men after the payment of their wages or that they compel them to buy food or necessaries from them at exorbitant prices. Indeed the system of stores which the Corporation has evolved, and maintains under the strictest supervision, has deprived the would-be profiteer of most of his opportunities and serves to restrain retail prices throughout the district. Not infrequently in times of high food prices the Corporation has authorised the sale of rice below the market price. The Stores are run under efficient and experienced management for the benefit of employees and profits are restricted to the lowest level compatible with running expenses and a moderate rate of interest upon the capital outlay.

## IV

A Staff Provident Fund has been established in which European and Asiatic members are alike deeply interested. The fund is vested in trustees and the capital sum now amounting to some Rs. 42,00,000 is invested in the securities of the Government of India. The Corporation maintains the capital at the level of its obligation to the Fund out of its earnings in spite of the heavy depreciation in those stocks which has recently occurred. The Corporation's contribution during the past year was Rs. 8,17,214. The General Manager, or the Secretary in Rangoon will be pleased to supply copies of the rules.

## V

The result of the care and forethought which has guided the Corporation, realising its responsibilities and its own best interest, in its relations with its labour force, is evidenced by the high degree of well-being and contentment which prevail in all its concessions. The measure of prosperity which the Corporation itself has achieved since the programme of 1919-1920 was adopted, could not have been attained without the goodwill, co-operation and mutual prosperity of its work people.

It is indeed the pride of the management that nowhere in India are relations between masters and men and peoples of such diverse races and creeds as are collected at Namtu, more cordial or more beneficial to the common good.

In this connection the text of an address presented to His Excellency the Governor of Burma, Sir Charles Innes, K.C.S.I., C.I.E., I.C.S., on the occasion of his first visit in March, 1928, is unsolicited evidence of these happy relations, and reads as follows:—

“ MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,

We, the Asiatic Employees and Contractors of the Burma Corporation, Ltd., and Residents in Namtu and Suburbs, feel ourselves proudly privileged to have this opportunity to accord a hearty welcome to Your Excellency and Lady Innes on your first visit to Namtu. We cannot be too grateful to Your Excellency for your gracious kindness in having only too willingly spared your invaluable time in meeting our representatives and elders at each of our arohways this evening and in honouring us with your presence here to-night.

“ It will doubtless be a source of pleasant pride to Your Excellency to find nestled together in this bosom of the Shan Hills a cosmopolitan population comprising of Europeans, Anglo-Indians, Burmans, Shans, the Chinese and the various denominations of the Indian community including a fair proportion of those hailing from the Madras Presidency where Your Excellency's strenuous service for nearly two decades is a significant and yet a fresh page in the history of Your Excellency's administration.

“ It will be all the more a source of gratification to Your Excellency, that against the diversity of caste, colour and creed of the constituents of this cosmopolitan population stands in bold relief, the unity of their interests with the Burma Corporation, and in striking contrast with the din and disturbance of the clang and whirl of machinery of this great industrial camp, there abides the peace and harmony of these people—a peace uninterrupted by party factions and unmarred by political agitations.

“ Blessed with this quiet-happiness and more blessed with the generous treatment of the Burma Corporation, the Address which we present to-night for Your Excellency's gracious acceptance is reflected in the condition that we have no grievances to recite, no cause to represent. In this connection we beg leave to mention our gratitude and assure of our loyalty to the Burma Corporation for their kindness in providing thousands of their employees with respectable housing accommodation, suitable water supply, hospital and sanitary arrangements and other amenities of life.

“ In token of our appreciation and esteem of Your Excellency's kind visit to Namtu and to this Club, we beg leave to present this Address in English together with its translation in each of the following nine vernaculars:—

Shan	Gurmuki	Bengali
Burmese	Tamil	Oori
Chinese	Malayalam	Gurkha. ”

### BURMA CORPORATION LIMITED, MINE DIVISION.

#### Memorandum dealing with the Contract Bonus system of payment operating at the Bawdwin Mine.

1. Eighty-two per cent. of the stopes worked in the Mine for the extraction of ore for shipment to the smelters are worked on a 'Contract Bonus' system.

All miners, muckers and truckers in these stopes, as in all other departments of the mine, are registered by the Company's Labour Registration Bureau at Bawdwin, and are paid

half-monthly on their attendances at their daily rates of pay (the minimum rate for an underground worker being Rs. 1-4 per day—maximum Rs. 2-4 per day).

3. In explanation of the 'Contract Bonus' system, a stope is let on contract to a crew of normally 15 men (5 on each shift including 1 leading miner) at a given rate per set of ground broken, timbered and subsequently filled—the rate is Rs. 35 per set of ground 7'-4" x 5' x 5' and Rs. 45 per cutting in set which requires the laying of square set cap and strut sills.

4. Prior to commencing work in the stope on the 'Contract Bonus' system, the rates to be paid, per set of ground, are agreed between the Company of the one part and the three leading miners (one on each shift) of the other part.

At the end of the month the number of sets obtained is worked out at the contract rates agreed and this contract amount then constitutes the earnings of the crew of 15 men for the month.

The wages of the crew as shown by the Company's Pay Rolls at their daily rates of pay is then totalled and the total amount of their wages is deducted from the contract earnings, the resultant surplus known as the 'Contract Bonus' is distributed amongst all the men in the crew *pro rata* on the amount of each man's monthly earnings, each man's contract bonus is then credited to him on a column provided on the Company's Pay Rolls, and the workman receives the total amount of his wages plus bonus in his second half month's pay envelope.

NOTE.—Before distributing the surplus earnings, 10 per cent. of it is apportioned for division amongst the three leading miners and is credited to them in addition to their normal share of the bonus.

5. The leading miner in each contract stope receives a statement of account prior to 'Pay Day' showing the number of sets he has been paid for during the month, the surplus earning or 'Contract Bonus' and the distribution of the bonus to each man in the crew.

6. All workmen are allowed to draw provisions from the Company's Provision Store, at any time during the month, up to 50 per cent. of their earnings as shown by their Time Cards.

The accompanying specimen statement showing stope 0-11 BE worked on contract during September 1930, together with the wages pay roll of the crew working this stope, demonstrates the manner in which the system works.

## BURMA CORPORATION, LIMITED.

## MINE DEPARTMENT.

*Underground contract bonus—September 1930.*

	Work No.	Amount of bonus.
		Rs. A. P.
Working Place—Stope 0-11 BE .. .. .	..	....
Leading Miner No. 9097—Day shift .. .. .	985	20 1 0
No. 3525—Afternoon shift .. .. .	1236	20 1 0
No. 11178—Night shift .. .. .	2980	22 1 0
	9097	13 0 0
		25 2 0
September Retention—Rs. 350 .. .. .	9453	24 1 0
October Retention—Rs. 400 .. .. .	2743	21 11 0
Rs. a. p.	2803	23 13 0
6½ Sets @ Rs. 45 = 303 12 0 .. .. .	3518	23 13 0
19½ Sets @ Rs. 35 = 673 12 0 .. .. .	3525	13 0 0
<b>Total .. 977 8 0 .. .. .</b>		<b>28 2 0</b>
	9324	23 13 0
Less Retention .. 50 0 0 .. .. .	97	25 2 0
		927 8 0
Less Wages .. 532 14 0 .. .. .	191	22 15 0
	792	24 1 0
Balance 394 10 0 .. .. .	1940	20 14 0
Less fines .. 0 13 0 .. .. .	11178	13 0 0
<b>Total Bonus paid 393 13 0 .. .. .</b>	..	<b>29 3 0</b>
<b>Total .. .. .</b>		<b>393 13 0</b>

## DAYMEN'S PAY ROLL.

The following men were employed on Slope 0-11 BE Baldwin Mine during the month of September 1930.

Number.	Name.	Employment.	Total No. of days.	Rate.	Total Amount.	Tha-thame-da Tax.	Amount Due.	Add Bonus- ea (Con- tract).	Amount to be paid.
				Rs. a.	Rs. a.	Rs. a.	Rs. a.	Rs. a.	
<i>Day Shift.</i>									
9097	Amir Singh ..	Leading Miner	12	1 10	19 8	5	14 8	38 2	52 10
985	Guria ..	Mucker	12	1 4	15 0	5	10 0	20 1	30 1
1236	Dalu Wa ..	Miner	12	1 4	15 0	5	10 0	20 1	30 1
2980	Hera Mani ..	Miner	12	1 6	16 8	5	11 8	22 1	33 9
9453	Pratap Singh ..	Miner	12	1 8	18 0	5	13 0	24 1	37 1
<i>Afternoon Shift.</i>									
3525	Gumani ..	Leading Miner	13	1 10	21 2	5	16 2	41 2	57 4
2743	Secree Dhar ..	Mucker	13	1 4	16 4	5	11 4	21 11	32 15
2803	Nand Ram ..	Miner	13	1 6	17 14	5	12 14	23 13	36 11
3518	Ganga Ram ..	Miner	13	1 6	17 14	5	12 14	23 13	36 11
9324	Kalu Singh ..	Miner	13	1 6	17 14	5	12 14	23 13	36 11
<i>Night Shift.</i>									
11178	Basu Behira ..	Leading Miner	14	1 12	24 8	5	19 8	42 3	61 11
97	Duryo Dhan ..	Miner	14	1 8	21 0	5	16 0	25 2	41 2
191	Deb Singh ..	Miner	14	1 6	19 4	5	14 4	22 15	37 3
792	Balkrishnan Rawat ..	Miner	13	1 8	19 8	5	14 8	24 1	38 9
1940	Gagi Chand ..	Mucker	14	1 4	17 8	5	12 8	20 14	33 6
Total wages for 2nd half of September 1930 ..					276 12	75	201 12	393 13	595 9
Total wages paid in first half of September 1930 ..					256 2	..	..	..	..
Grand total wages for the month of September 1930					532 14	..	..	..	..

Letter from the General Manager, Burma Corporation, Ltd., Namtu, dated the 31st October 1930.

Sequent to the request for certain information preferred by the Chairman of the Royal Commission at Namtu, N. S. S., on the 22nd instant, I have the honour to submit 4 copies of statistics with the following comment :—

- (a) Number of workers (excluding Europeans) in the Burma Corporation's employ, September, 1930.
- (b) Classification of Employees—details for each of two months being shown, January and September, 1930. Please note "Forest Department" in this tabulation and the variation between the numbers for the months chosen. The September employees may be regarded as permanent, whereas the January total includes Yunnanese (Chinese) seasonal migrant sawyers, muleteers and coolies who enter the Northern Shan States about mid-December and fall (under contract), saw the logs into boards and pack by mule and bullocks to railway sidings: departing from Namtu about end of March on the return journey to Yunnan.
- (c) "Numbers and percentages of each nationality.....": figures are for the month of September in each year, 1925 and 1930.
- (d) Aggregate wages payments to Indians both day labour and contract.
- (e) I have to inform that the "number of females living in above areas" yields misleading figures as a number of our employees (married and single) live within the Government villages of Panghai and E'hang adjoining the Corporation's leases. Other females dwell within the precincts of these towns, wives and daughters of business people, etc., not directly employed by the Corporation.
- (f) Statement\* showing the average number of employees and the number of accidents happened in various departments during the year 1929.

\* Printed in consolidated form.

## (a) Number of workers (excluding Europeans) in the Burma Corporation's employ.

	Bawdwin and Tiger Camp.	Namtu.	Total.
For less than 1 year .. .. .	785	1,775	2,560
Do. 2 years and more than 1 year .. .. .	1,117	1,727	2,844
Do. 3 years and more than 2 years .. .. .	925	1,451	2,376
Do. 4 years and more than 3 years .. .. .	772	919	1,691
Do. 5 years and more than 4 years .. .. .	798	713	1,511
Do. 6 years and more than 5 years .. .. .	749	717	1,466
Do. 10 years and more than 5 years .. .. .	557	2,315	2,872
Do. 15 years and more than 10 years .. .. .	88	656	744
	5,791	10,273	16,064

## (b) Classification of employees of the Burma Corporation.

	January, 1930.	September, 1930.
Mines Act .. .. .	7,035	6,218
Factories Act .. .. .	4,922	5,036
Forest Department .. .. .	4,108	833
Railway Department .. .. .	1,474	1,332
Miscellaneous .. .. .	2,305	2,645
	19,844	16,064

## (c) Numbers and Percentages of each Nationality employed by the Burma Corporation.

	Year 1925.		Year 1930.	
	Total.	Percent- ages.	Total.	Percent ages.
Indian (including Gurkhas) .. .. .	7,384	60·6	10,798	67·20
Burmans .. .. .	826	6·8	1,171	7·30
Shan and Meingtha .. .. .	1,763	14·5	1,164	7·25
Chinese .. .. .	1,538	12·6	2,322	14·45
Miscellaneous .. .. .	672	5·5	609	3·80
	12,183	100·0	16,064	100·00

	Bawdwin & Tiger Camp.	Namtu.	Total.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
(d) Aggregate wages payments to all Indians (including Gurkhas) direct by the Burma Corporation during month of September 1930.	1,68,440	2,70,674	4,39,114
Aggregate payments to Contractors using Indian (including Gurkhas) labour during month of September 1930.	14,345	53,114	91,367
(e) Number of Married Indians (including Gurkhas) living in the areas of the Burma Corporation without their families.	2,707	3,017	5,814
Number of females living in above areas :—			
Indian (including Gurkhas) .. .. .	778	254	432
Others .. .. .	245	474	719

Statement showing the average number of employees and the number of accidents happened during the year 1929.

Department.	Average number of employees.	Mine accidents.		
		Fatal.	Serious.	Slight.
Bawdwin Mine (Underground) .. ..	4,928	9	82	..
Do. (Surface) .. ..	836	..	10	..
Iron ore Mines (Underground) .. ..	..	..	..	..
Do. (Surface) .. ..	652	2	2	..
Limestone quarries (Underground) .. ..	..	..	..	..
Do. (Surface) .. ..	202	1	2	..
Factories and Railways (Surface) .. ..	8,132	5	40	396

#### SUPPLEMENTARY MEMORANDUM DEALING WITH THE NAMTU GENERAL HOSPITAL.

The General Hospital has accommodation for 170 patients.

Private Wards .. ..	11
Surgical Wards .. ..	31
Lower Medical Ward .. ..	34
Middle Medical Ward .. ..	36
Upper Medical Ward .. ..	34
Female Ward .. ..	14
Isolation Ward .. ..	10
Total .. ..	170

The Female block is the centre for the Child Welfare Scheme.

The Out-patients Department has a daily average attendance of 225.

There is a fully equipped Pathological and X-Ray Department.

The Anti-Malarial Scheme is worked from the Hospital as a Centre.

All persons, whether employees or not, are treated free of charge.

The Staff consists of—

Chief Medical Officer—Dr. J. Oliver Hamilton, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.

Assistant Chief Medical Officer—Dr. J. Hughes, M.B., B.S., D.P.H.

Assistant Chief Medical Officer, Bawdwin—Mr. F. G. Stewart, F.R.C.S., M.B.

*Assistant Medical Officers.*

Dr. K. Karuvan, Out-patients Department.

Dr. P. K. V. Iyer, Private Wards and " A " Medical Wards.

Dr. P. Kannayi, " B " and " C " Medical Wards.

Dr. Seshai Iyer, Assistant Medical Officer.

Dr. P. A. S. Iyer, Surgical Wards.

Matron—Miss C. Urquhart.

and

6 Nursing Sisters.

#### NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN IN BURMA.

The National Council of Women in Burma having been invited to prepare evidence to put before the Royal Commission on Labour in India, a Sub-Committee was appointed in October 1929 to make investigations into labour conditions in this Province as touching the welfare of women and children.

It is a truism that there is as great a difference between industrial women in India and Burma, as between India and England. The Indian woman in Indian industry is a problem for India to settle. The Burmese woman in industry has, as yet, hardly become a problem. The present Factory Act protects, to a great extent, the women and children in factories. In occupations not falling within scope of the Act, the work at present, as far as the knowledge of this Committee

goes, is never arduous to exhaustion. The pay may not be lavish, yet what is earned is generally looked upon as a welcome addition to the family income. There is not that "work or starve" atmosphere about it that one gets in Europe. It is, of course, our duty to see that all women and children shall work under the best conditions possible, and at least cost to themselves physically and mentally. Therefore it is to be hoped that all occupations will be watched so that, if a period of vigorous industrialism comes to the country, there may be provision for the adequate protection of women and children.

Burmese women as a rule work at the following trades: umbrella making, candle packing, carton making, cheroot making, cigar and cigarette rolling. They are employed in match factories filling, packing and labelling, boxes and packages, in rope factories, in the making of aluminium cooking vessels, in soap factories, at cotton spinning and weaving, and at silk weaving, as bean pickers, but agricultural life is still the lot of the vast majority, as it is the mainstay of the country. Burmese women, whether they work in towns or on the land, work mainly to supplement the earnings of their families. Often the woman is, virtually, the head of the family and sometimes its sole support. There is also a small percentage of Chinese women labourers, who work on the land with their families as market gardeners and poultry farmers.

It should be stated here that the scope of the present enquiry was limited to Rangoon and neighbourhood, and that the condition of women and children, either Indian or Burmese, out of Rangoon was not investigated.

It is when consideration of and enquiry into the work of the Indian immigrant woman was taken up that conditions changed and a real problem was faced. Separate figures of the numbers of women immigrants, which have hitherto not been available, will be found in an appendix (Q). Indian women work on the land, in domestic service, in rice mills and, generally speaking, where their menfolk work. For these women, seldom permanent, there is no adequate provision either of housing, welfare work, or medical aid. Immigrant labour brings us face to face with various economic consequences arising from the crowding together of employees in small or congested areas. The question of housing with its vital influence on the health of women workers and the wives and families of men workers, is the fundamental difficulty to which nearly all subsequent problems can be traced.

The report has been divided for the sake of clarity and convenience into the following sections:—

(1) Housing. (2) Health. (3) Welfare. (4) Hours. (5) Wages and (6) Special questions relating to women and children.

### III.—Housing.

16. (i) Accommodation is provided to some extent in the rice mills. Mr. Bennison, in his report on the Standard and Cost of Living of the Working Classes in Rangoon, 1928, writes as follows:—"In the large mills and factories, some sort of housing accommodation is usually provided for the majority of the workers, but in the smaller mills and factories housing is either not provided at all or, if provided, can accommodate only a very small proportion. The accommodation provided is usually in the form of barracks, which are suitable only for single men. In most of the rice mills married workers are employed but in practically all of them married quarters are not provided. These families put up improvised gunny, plank or mat partitions for purposes of privacy. Not having been provided for in the original plans as passed by the Buildings department of the Corporation, they are often objected to by the Corporation authorities." We quote this because it very clearly gives an idea of what may be found. Accommodation is only provided by some mills, and is never sufficient to house the extra hands taken on in the busy season, and often not even enough for the more or less permanent staff. Rent is not charged when coolie lines are provided, but when it is quite impossible to crowd more into the coolie lines, the Maistry usually rents a large godown. Except for the modern type of coolie barracks, provided only by two firms, the mill accommodation is bad, and in many cases frankly appalling. Even when the buildings themselves are fairly satisfactory, they become insanitary and overcrowded through lack of adequate supervision. We think that this matter ought to be taken up by the Corporation. Mill coolie barracks come within the definition of Registered Buildings, and under Rule 11 of Chapter XII of the Rules made under section 235 of the City of Rangoon Municipal Act, the Corporation has powers of inspection (Appendix K).

(ii) The Corporation provides accommodation for a proportion of its employees, but as these are not built on modern lines and have no accommodation for married men and families, the conditions are almost as bad as in the older type of lodging house. Here adequate inspection by the Health authorities would greatly improve matters.

(iii) Practically all the accommodation, both in the city and in the suburbs, is provided by private landlords. Land in the city and its vicinity is extremely valuable, and rents are correspondingly high. Houses when puoca, both in the city and suburbs, suffer from lack of ventilation. The rooms run from back to front and partitions cut off portions of the houses from all light and most of the air. In most tenement houses, the staircases which are wooden, often climb as steeply as a ladder and are frequently without hand rails.

19. There is great overcrowding, both in suburbs and city, and this added to the unhealthy type of pucca buildings, has deleterious effect on the general health of the town. In suburbs such as Theinbyu, Kalabasti, Ponna Basti, where rooms are fairly satisfactory and could house three, four or five people comfortably, there will be never less than eight and often twelve living in them. In the city conditions are much worse and almost unbelievable unless they have been actually seen. It has been stated in the Report on the Public Health of Rangoon, 1927, that : " the middle classes are being squeezed out by the conversion of premises occupied by them into lodging houses." We found this to be the case, and that the second floors of fairly good houses were occupied by superior clerks and their families, while the ground floor was let to Maistries for the housing of coolies, either men only staying in Rangoon for the night, or for permanent lodgers. These lodging houses cannot be condemned too severely, and have already been condemned by various committees appointed to go into this all important question of Housing in particular in the Report on the Public Health of Rangoon, 1927, and in the Report on Housing by the Social Service League, 1925. Public interest and public opinion must be awakened in this direction. We refer to Appendix M which gives an account of a visit to certain of these lodging houses. We also quote the following from the Report on Public Health : " In one room where we counted fifty coolies, the number allowed by regulation was nine. The conditions are indescribable. Every inch of floor space is occupied by a sleeping human being, and others are to be found on shelves and in bunks along the walls. The only apertures in the way of door and windows are shut. . . . . In most of these houses two or three women are to be found, and in some of them we came across so-called married quarters consisting of a portion of the room screened off with gunny bags, and containing perhaps a charpoy." This was true in 1927 and is equally true in 1930, and though our own visits were made shortly after the riots, when the number of emigrants for the months of June and July had reached over forty thousand, we still found great overcrowding in some rooms in 27th Street though in 37th Street whole houses were empty. The ventilation in all the rooms of this type is practically nil, and when the door is shut consists only of a small grill. There is generally no visible exit at the back either by window or door, though in one case, after much difficulty, a door was opened which led on to a particularly filthy back drainage space (See Appendix M).

We are strongly of the opinion that immediate steps should be taken to provide adequate accommodation for the immigrant coolie labour. We are in agreement with the recommendation of the Social Service League :—" That not less than 15 per cent. of the accommodation in each tenement be reserved for married persons with their families, and that this accommodation be confined to one section of the building, preferably on the ground floor."

We are of the opinion that the management of these new buildings should be entrusted to a " Housing Trust " as proposed by the Social Service League : " The trustees to be largely persons interested in social reform, with some business men and representatives of the Government and the Corporation . . . . such housing trusts are numerous in England, the Peabody Trust being one of the oldest and best known in England, and the Bournville Trust is one of the largest of the modern Trusts."

We also consider that ' rest ' houses should be provided, as suggested in the report of the Public Health of Rangoon, Volume I, for labourers disembarking in Rangoon and proceeding up-country or waiting to return to India.

20. The rents in Kalabasti, Ponnabasti and Theinbyu (suburbs within easy reach of the town where roads are good) vary from 12—35 rupees per room per mensem. The older buildings in these districts are dilapidated, some in a shocking state of disrepair but all were inhabited. The newer houses we saw were on the sewage system. The rent in these houses will be from Rs. 20—25 per room per mensem. This includes kitchen and washing place; but where electric light is added to other amenities, it will be as much as Rs. 35 per mensem.

In East Rangoon, most of the buildings are pucca and are occupied by clerks in Government services or in mercantile firms, with their families ; a small proportion by Burmese families, and a smaller, by Europeans. An average rent for each room is Rs. 45 though some are as much as Rs. 80 (Appendix N).

In the city (the area between Godwin Road on the west and Judah Ezekiel Street on the east) the rents are extremely high. Many of these houses are " lodging houses " and Rs. 35 to Rs. 60 per mensem is charged for one room. These rooms, several of which we went over, are often not more than 12½ feet wide and 30—40 feet long including the kitchen and latrine which are in one. The only ventilation is through the grill above the door which is usually closed. These rooms are thoroughly unhealthy and the rent charged for them exorbitant.

Rent is not charged in mill coolie lines or in those provided by the Corporation or other bodies.

22. As is pointed out in every report on Housing, overcrowding and lack of accommodation prevent the immigrant man from bringing his family to Rangoon. This leads to drink, drugs and vice. The traffic in these is notorious. In many barracks in the town and in East and West Rangoon, occupied by immigrant labourers, it is a common thing to see promiscuous herding together of single men, single women and families within a small room. Single women

may often be seen in an overcrowded room under the eots of couples or next to men to whom they are not related in any way.

1. *Recommendations.*—In our opinion the Corporation Building bye-laws should be revised and strictly enforced to ensure adequate light and ventilation in all buildings.

2. In our opinion all houses should have back staircases into back drainage spaces, which should be made pucca as soon as possible.

3. In our opinion there should be two staircases in every pucca building, and that at least one should be of masonry or iron for safety in case of fire. All staircases should be provided with a handrail and a reasonable gradient insisted upon.

4. In our opinion as far as possible all mills and factories should provide housing accommodation for as many immigrant workers as are permanently employed.

5. In our opinion (a) suitable accommodation for other immigrant labour should be provided by the Corporation or by Building Trusts;

(b) that special provision should be made for married quarters, cf. section 3, 22.

We are strongly in favour of the recommendations of the Social Service League in their Note on the "Provision of Housing for the Labourers in Rangoon" April 1930.

#### IV.—Health.

##### 23. (i) *Figures of total mortality.*

	Male.	Female.	
Christians .. .. .	24·55	23·43	Per thousand.
Mahomedans .. .. .	24·13	43·5	"
Hindus .. .. .	28·55	54·01	"
Burmese .. .. .	43·68	42·72	"

NOTE.—The figures given include all races, i.e., under Hindu are grouped Hindustania, Tamils, Telugus, Oriyas, etc., while under Mahomedan come Muslims of all races.

(ii) Birth rate : 21·49 per thousand.

Infant mortality : 340·69 per thousand births (Health Report for 1928-29).

It is important to note that death from respiratory diseases is 9·81 per thousand, almost four times the death rate for any other disease, also that the death rate among Hindu women is almost twice that of the men, and among the Mohamedans, nearly as high. Unfortunately there are no figures to show among which classes the death rate is heaviest.

(iii). (a) Eleven mills and factories were inspected (See Appendices). On the whole we consider that working conditions are not unsatisfactory. The greatest disadvantage is the heat, but most of the workers we saw were far better off than they would be in their own homes. In one factory punkhas were provided for the carton makers. In rice mills there is a great deal of dust, but medical opinion does not hold that this is particularly injurious.

(b) Home workers are mainly engaged as umbrella-makers, dressmakers, match box makers, cigar, cigarette and cheroot-makers. Where the work is done in the old type of Burmese house, conditions are fairly satisfactory. The umbrella-makers and cheroot-makers either work on verandhas or in the open. If the work is done in pucca buildings where light and air are excluded the conditions are not good.

(c) The physique of the women workers seemed in every case at least equal to that of the men. Some of the Indian women workers seen were sturdy, and the Burmese women, though not so robust, were wiry looking.

(iii) The predominance of respiratory and lung diseases in Rangoon and suburbs is proof of the unsuitability of the housing to the types of occupants, and shows to what a great extent the overcrowding is responsible for consumption and such ills. The following quotation is given as showing what a leading physician of Rangoon thought were the causes of the problem :—

"We would venture to suggest that the time has arrived when something must be done to stay the appalling increase in tuberculosis in Rangoon. Twenty-five years ago we were seldom called upon to treat consumption but to-day a very large proportion of our work is the treatment of tuberculosis in some form or other. It occurs particularly in the clerical staffs of Government and mercantile offices, and in banks, and those mostly affected are the Burmese and the Chino-Burmese clerks, although Bengali and Madras clerks are by no means immune. We attribute this dreadful scourge to the modern type of pucca building with its narrow stairs and small rooms and smaller windows, but big rents necessitate overcrowding. The insanitary house built on piles, as we knew in our Lanmadaw of twenty-five years ago, with slush and filth underneath, was, apparently, better suited to the Burmese constitution than the modern pucca tenement house. It amounts to this, that the people had far more space per individual and the rooms

were not 'hermetically sealed' chambers at night."—*Dr. A. D. Spence evidence to the Special Committee on Public Health, 1926.* The comparative figures for last year for tuberculosis death rate are given :—

	Men.	Women.
Deaths from Tuberculosis .. .. .	2,239	1,150
Total deaths .. .. .	7,264	4,426

24. (i) Certain medical facilities are provided by some employers. The larger firms provide free medical attention, and the girls and women as a rule avail themselves of these facilities. In some of the large mills and factories there is a resident doctor, or where this is not the case, a visiting doctor. First aid is usually provided, and sometimes there is a dispensary.

24. (ii) There is no provision for women doctors, trained midwives or *daies* in mills or factories.

25. (i) Medical facilities are made little use of by the Indian immigrant women. They are made more use of as a rule by Burmese and domiciled Indian women, who do go to the Maternity shelters and free dispensaries. There were no available statistics of births and deaths in mills or factories.

26. (a) (i) *Latrines.*—Few factories or mills have latrines connected with the city sewage. In Municipal areas, bucket latrines are used, and are usually emptied once or twice a day. There are rarely enough for the women and children in the slack season, while in the busy season conditions are very unsatisfactory. In one large mill, there were four buckets missing in the women's latrine inspected by us. The bucket system is bad in principle but worse in practice as it is nobody's business to keep the latrine and its surroundings clean. At a mill near the Poozoondoung Creek, the latrines which were modern, were flushed every ten minutes. These were of a satisfactory type but not sufficient in number.

(ii) Drinking water is available in all mills and factories. The quality is as good as, and often better than, the workers get in their own homes, but there are usually not enough standpipes, while in some cases they are too far from the quarters or work place.

(iii) Bathing and washing facilities are rarely adequate, and in some cases totally inadequate, for the number of men, women and children in the lines. We have only once seen separate bathing places provided for the women.

(b) (i) Latrines in the city are water-flushed, while in the suburbs and outlying districts the pit and bucket systems prevail.

(ii) The city is served by Municipal water. Most of the tenement houses have one tap on the ground floor. Where buildings are divided into residential flats, each floor will have its own water supply, but there are always complaints from the inhabitants that the water does not flow in the hot weather. The daily Press during this season for the past few years will be found full of comments and complaints. In the suburbs and outlying districts the supply is from wells sometimes artesian, but very often the sole source of supply is from an old surface well.

(iii) There are standpipes in the roads and streets. These are used for washing and bathing as well as for drinking water, and the wastage of water is tremendous.

29. The figures of mortality will be found in the Health Report and in the special Report on the Health of Rangoon, 1927. These however are only under headings of Hindu, Mahomedan, Burmese and Christian, whereas a further classification of Ooriyas, Tamil, Telugu, Chittagonian, etc., would be of great assistance in collecting information concerning any one section of the community. It is extremely difficult to get statistics of diseases in mills or factories.

31. There are no maternity benefit schemes.

1. *Recommendations.*—In our opinion the statistics showing birth and death rates should be divided and kept separately to show the figures for each race, i.e., Hindustani, Telugu, Chittagonians, Ooriyas, Burmans, etc., etc.

2. In our opinion, in order that the Government Bye-Laws with regard to the committing of Public Nuisance may be enforced, public latrines should be erected at various points in the city and outkirks without delay. It has been said that the placing of such latrines is a difficulty. It would seem that the more public they are, the better, as that would ensure a rigid cleanliness. It is impossible, it seems to us, to educate people to the value of cleanliness in such vital matters if they find no public latrines and have to carry on in the bad old style of using any open drain.

3. In our opinion no real improvement in sanitation is possible until there is an extension of the water carriage system in place of the tub latrines.

4. In our opinion the wastage of water, i.e., in public standpipes and in houses, should be controlled by metering all water supplies. In every case public standpipes should have spring taps instead of open ones.

5. In our opinion the immediate erection of a Sanatorium for the treatment of tuberculosis is one of the urgent needs of the Province.

## V.—Welfare.

32. (i) Practically nothing is done in Rangoon, except by the Rangoon Telephone Company which has a Welfare Superintendent. There is also a Welfare Officer in the B. O. C. at Syriam but no welfare work is done among the women workers.

(ii) The Society for the Promotion of Infant Welfare has four maternity shelters, at Tamwe, Pazundaung, Ahlone and Kemmendine. Patients are taken in and treated free. The Society receives Government and Municipal Grants besides public subscriptions and contributions from the Burma Branch of the Red Cross Society.

The Baby Welcome Clinic at Kemmendine, founded and run by the N. C. W. B. endeavours to fill the gap between the maternity hospital or shelter and the school. The Clinic's main endeavour is to instruct the mothers in elementary hygiene and feeding, etc. (thus attempting to raise the standard of health). Its object is more that of prevention than that of cure. A feature of the Clinic is its voluntary workers, members of the N. C. W. B. who are in many cases trained nurses. A considerable amount of visiting also is done by the paid nurse and it is intended to increase this when the Health Visitor is employed.

The Ramakrishna Mission has worked in East Rangoon for a number of years amongst the poorest classes. Up till recently only men in-patients were admitted to the hospital, but there is now a women's ward which we understand is about to be re-organised.

The Corporation of Rangoon is responsible for two Infant Welfare Clinics, in charge of fully qualified lady doctors. The work done at these clinics is both post and ante-natal, but simple ailments of women and children are also treated free of charge. The average daily attendance shows a marked increase since last year. A new dispensary for women has been sanctioned by the Corporation at Kemmendine and is under construction. There are two other dispensaries run by the Corporation at Dalla and Kanaungtoe. At Dalla a nurse-midwife attends to confinements in private homes, and recently sanction has been given for a nurse midwife at Kanaungtoe. There is only one Government dispensary for women and children. This is situated in Pazundaung.

Street Boys Refuge.—This was opened in November 1929 in Fraser Street. Its purpose is to "rescue destitute boys of suitable age and to provide them with shelter, food, clothing training and education." It originated from the work of a committee organised by the Y. M. C. A. and arising out of Mr. Paterson's visit to Burma and his subsequent report. The N. C. W. B. became interested in the project and abandoned plans for a shelter of their own. They also raised a large fund towards the cost of the Refuge building and are maintaining an interest in the work. It is now under the control of a board of trustees. One hundred and fifty boys have passed through the Refuge and there were forty-nine in residence at the end of June 1930.

Children's Aid and Protection Society.—This society does the work its name implies, and maintains a Home for Waifs and Strays. This Home, founded by Mrs. Luce, was started in November 1928. Mrs. Luce has shown both enthusiasm and patience in the work she has made her own. Boys without visible means of support are sought in the city streets; their suspicions allayed, home, food and clothes provided. The Home is doing a most valuable work in saving many children from that destitution which leads to crime.

33. There are six lady health visitors employed by the Corporation who are fully qualified nurse-midwives and who help the doctors in maternity work besides instructing the women in hygiene. The Corporation has recently sanctioned the engagement of three nurse-midwives for the town area, of which a certain portion has been notified by Government under the Burma Nurses Midwives Act as a prohibited area. This means that no unqualified midwife may attend cases of confinement within the said area.

34. (ii) The chief opportunity for Physical Culture for women and girls is provided by the Y. W. C. A. The Physical Directress, Miss Amaron, holds classes for working girls, teachers and students in schools and colleges.

The Corporation provides a Children's Section in Fytche Square and others are being considered. The Playgrounds Committee recommended that more free spaces should be set apart for playgrounds or parks. Something towards this has been done. The full Report of the Rangoon Playgrounds Committee may be studied.

One day is reserved for women and children in Dalhousie Park.

36. This is the exception and not the rule. The B. B. T. C. L. has a school for the children of its employees, and the Railways have a large school at Insein.

*Recommendations.*—1. In our opinion Welfare work should be organized by Mill owners and all employers of labour who have a permanent staff. Much is being done in India by the Tata Mills and others with marked success, while in Burma the B. O. C., Ltd., stand alone in the welfare work they have organized on the Oil Fields. The employer's responsibility for his labour does not end with the payment of wages, and more care for the welfare of the worker would benefit employer as well.

2. In our opinion maternity benefits should be provided.

3. In our opinion the need for women doctors and health visitors who can speak the language is an urgent one.

## IX.—Hours.

A. 55. (i) The Factory Act is in force and women do not work longer than 10 or 11 hours a day and 60 hours a week. In mills, however, the complicated 'shift' system makes it difficult to ascertain how long the women actually do work, particularly in the busy season, when the mills are going day and night.

(ii) Overtime work we found was not usual, but in several factories the women continue working during the 2 hours or 1½ hours interval during the day. This will always be done until the sheds are locked during the midday interval.

(iii) In the Rice Mills the women are sometimes on call for 12 hours but during that time they have plenty of rest waiting for the trains or the boats.

60. (i) The usual custom is to have 2 hours or an hour and a half in the late morning for food. In some factories the women may work in this time if they want to, in others the work-shops are locked. The women can always stop work if they are tired, and there are many who work less than 10 hours a day. Some come in the mornings, others in the afternoons, as it suits them best, as they are on piece work for the most part.

(ii) Only holidays for religious festivals are given, and vary with the religion of the proprietor, though we were informed that one factory closes for all the chief Burmese, Mahomedan, Hindu and Christian holidays.

61. There is one day of rest either on Friday or Sunday in all factories which come under the Act, except in the Rice Mills in the busy season.

## XII.—Wages.

96. The pay for women in factories in Rangoon varies from Rs. 12 to Rs. 20 per mensem, though it is possible for good workers in the match factories to make as much as Rs. 35. Some carton makers with overtime can make Rs. 54 per mensem.

Of the nine industries inspected by us, two paid for time and piece work, four paid by piece work, one paid by time only, while the rice mills are all piece work.

In one factory the piece workers are paid once a fortnight, while the time workers once every ten days. In others wages are paid monthly except in the rice mills where payment is weekly.

Girls and women in shops (see Appendix O) are as a rule not well paid, and the minimum wage is by no means an economic one. The starting rate in one of the largest European shops is Rs. 35 a month, and the maximum rate Rs. 100. One girl only was getting this while the majority were getting Rs. 50 and Rs. 60 per mensem. The standard of living of these workers must of necessity be considerably higher than the factory workers, and the difference in wages is not sufficient to allow for this.

Leave rules, sick benefits and provident funds could all be improved on.

In commercial offices the pay is good, sometimes generous; leave rules and sick benefits apply and there is the benefit of provident funds and sometimes a bonus.

100. At one match factory, one hundred and fifty women are employed, and paid directly by the management, while five hundred are contract labour and are paid on piece work through a Burmese contractor, who receives a 6 per cent. commission on all work done. In the other factories we inspected, with the exception of the mills, wages are paid direct to the women, so deductions are not made.

It is when we come to the payment of women in mills that the evils of the maistry system are evident. We quote from Mr. Bennison's Report on the standard and Cost of Living of the Working Classes: "As a rule the employers know little or nothing about the relations between the maistries and their coolies. The coolies are afraid to represent their grievances to the employers, and the employers, on the other hand, do not think it is their business to interfere." (Page 80). This is exactly what we found. The mill managers could give us the rates of pay for work done, but told us that deductions were made by the maistries, and that they did not know what the men and women actually got. Questions answered by the Head Maistries or the sub-Maistries were always unsatisfactory, and would have to be fully verified. Any question addressed to a coolie would be answered by a sub-maistry, but we must remember that the language bar, in spite of interpreters, is a stumbling block between the enquirer and the labourer. It is safe to say however that 40 per cent. is deducted before the worker gets anything.\* This shows that the chief evil of the maistry system is underpayment; the second is under-employment, and the third is overcrowding. For further information on this very important subject, see Report by Mr. E. J. L. Andrew and Mr. J. J. Bennison. We might point out here that the B. O. C. not only recruits direct, labour required, but also pays all its labour direct and finds it far more satisfactory in every respect. This Company has a permanent staff of workers, and does not have to deal with the necessity for extra labour during the busy season as the rice mills do, which they say would make the direct employment of labour extremely difficult. In connection with this subject, the following extract is interesting: "At the present

\* Indian Labour in Rangoon (Oxford University press) by E. J. L. Andrew.

time large numbers of coolies come over from Madras paying their own way independently of Maistries, and find employment as stevedores' and wharf coolies, rickshaw and handcart pullers, or in factories other than Rice mills. These factories pay their labour direct and have no difficulty in obtaining their requirements locally. Most of the casual workers would prefer to work in Rice mills if they could be paid by the employers." (Bennison Report, page 80).

*Recommendations.*—1. We recommend the abolition of the Maistry system, and the direct employment of labour by employers whenever possible, or failing this, recruitment through a Society such as the Servants of India Society or the Salvation Army.

2. In our opinion the methods of recruitment of labour in Ceylon and the F. M. S. might be studied with a view to the possibility of their being introduced into Burma.

3. In our opinion there should be a direct payment of labour.

4. In our opinion there should be an increase in the starting rate of pay of girls in shops.

### X.—Special questions relating to women, young adults and children.

A. 82. Infants are not allowed and we only saw a few with their mothers.

83 and 84. Regulations for women's work seem suitable as are also those for children. We would like to quote the following from the 1928 report on the working of the Indian Factories Act.

"There is a considerable drop in the number of children employed but such little use is made of child labour in the province that the matter is of no importance. Probably some of the persons returned as children are over 15 years of age and it would really inflict no hardship on the province if the employment of children was entirely prohibited."

There were one hundred children working in one match factory and none of them seemed unduly pressed. We were told that whole families were employed, and children were not taken on if their parents were not already working in the factory.

86. There are no facilities for apprenticeship of girls.

87. The "blind alley" employment hardly exists. The boy coolie in the bazaars becomes the man coolie of the godowns. The boy "chokras" or servants in Clubs and private houses become later table servants, cooks and butlers.

(Refer to the Report on Vocational and Technical Education, 1928.)

89. As far as we know, there are few if any women and children working in factories (as defined in the Indian Factory Act) which do not come under the Act. According to the Chief Inspector of Factories, the Local Government do not generally avail themselves of section 2 (3) (b). This perhaps is as well, until the number of factory Inspectors is considerably increased. It is worse than useless making rules and regulations which cannot be enforced.

There are many women working in their homes and workshops who are not inspected. The following figures taken from the census are interesting in this connection :

Silk and cotton spinning and weaving .. .. .	68,884
Basket makers and similar occupations .. .. .	5,546
Ceramics .. .. .	1,035
Manufacturers of Tobacco .. .. .	8,331
Milliners and dressmakers .. .. .	17,835

#### *Recommendations—Housing.*

1. We recommend that the Corporation bye-laws should be revised and strictly enforced to ensure adequate light and ventilation in all buildings.

2. We recommend that all houses should have back staircases into back drainage spaces, which should be made puuca as soon as possible.

3. We recommend that there should be two staircases in every puuca building, and that at least one should be masonry or iron for safety in case of fire. All staircases should be provided with handrails and a reasonable gradient insisted upon.

4. We recommend that as far as possible all mills and factories should provide housing accommodation for as many immigrant workers as are permanently employed.

5. We recommend that—

(a) suitable accommodation for other immigrant labour should be provided by the Corporation or by Building Trusts ;

(b) that special provision should be made for married quarters, *cf.*, section 3, 22.

We are strongly in favour of the recommendations of the Social Service League in their Note on the "Provision of Housing for the Labourers in Rangoon", April 1930.

1. **Health.**—We recommend that birth and death statistics for each race, i.e., Hindustani, Tamil, Telugu, Chittagonian, Ooriya, Burman, etc., should be separately recorded. This would give some idea of the influence of vocation and standard of living on vital statistics.

2. We recommend the adequate provision of latrines in mills and in the city as a preliminary to the drastic enforcement of the Corporation bye-laws with regard to the committing of Public Nuisance.

3. We strongly support the recommendations already made for the immediate provision of a Sanatorium for the treatment of tuberculosis.

4. We recommend that the regulations for the inspection of coolie lines by the Health Department of the Corporation should be more strictly enforced.

1. **Welfare.**—We recommend that employers should organise Welfare work, at any rate amongst their permanent workers. (Such work is being done amongst the workers in the B. O. C. oil fields.)

2. We recommend the provision of sick benefits and maternity benefits for workers in mills, factories and shops.

**Wages.**—1. We recommend—

(a) the abolition of the Maistry system, and the direct employment of labour by employers whenever possible, or, failing this, through the Agency of some Society such as the Servants of India Society or the Salvation Army;

(b) that the methods of recruitment of labour in Ceylon and in the F. M. S. be studied with a view to the possibility of their being introduced into Burma;

(c) the direct payment of labour.

2. We recommend an increase in the starting rates of pay of girls in shops.

#### APPENDIX A.

Messrs. Steel Bros. Rice Mill, Lower Pazundaung.

This was visited on February 3rd, 1930, after permission had been obtained from the Manager. The Manager met and escorted the party round the Mill.

The number of women employed varied considerably but about 5 to each gang of 25 seemed the average number.

The work consisted in carrying baskets of paddy from the boats to the sheds and from the sheds to the trains.

The labour is all contract and in charge of a Coolie Maistri. The gangs work in shifts.

The women are all Telugu and Tamil coolies, though Burmese women are sometimes employed for dividing rice.

**Housing.**—Coolie barracks are provided with single and married quarters. These are inspected by the Municipality, and any complaints attended to. The regular workers live in the coolie lines, but the extra daily workers taken on in the busy season live in Rangoon.

**Health.**—The physique of the women seemed as good as that of the men. There is a Mill Doctor who will prescribe. The women do not go to him and illness is hidden.

There are separate latrines for women. There is water for drinking (Rangoon water supply) but no washing or bathing facilities.

No statistics of disease were available.

**Maternity Benefits.**—None.

**Welfare Work.**—None.

**Education.**—None.

There is First Aid available.

**Hours.**—The work is spasmodic, but is usually in two shifts during the day. The rest times depend upon the state of the tides, the arrival of trains and the work of the mill. During the busy season milling continues all day and night, including Sundays, and there is no rest day, but as far as we could see, the individuals got enough rest periods.

**Wages.**—It is almost impossible to ascertain what wages the woman gets. Whatever pay she gets is after deductions are made by the Maistry for advances. Two women working on the railway line said they got from four to five annas a day.

#### APPENDIX B.

Messrs. Bulloch Bros. Rice Mill, Lower Pazundaung.

This was visited on Tuesday, February 11th, 1930, after permission had been obtained from the Manager. The party was escorted round the Mill.

Between four hundred and five hundred women are employed during the busy season. They are all Indians except four, who give out tallies to the other workers.

200 women and 400 men carry baskets. 20 women and 150 men carry bags.

There are no children employed.

*Housing.*—Messrs. Bolloch Bros. provide coolie lines free of charge. The quarters seem to consist of one fair sized room for each family (the size varies slightly according to the number in the family) and a share of quite a nice cook place. We saw one corner of the lines only; they struck us all as being very dirty and full of flies, though this was said to be the cleanest part. During the busy season, when more hands are employed than the lines can hold, the maistry rents a shed from a private landlord; he says he pays Rs. 20 per mensem for a shed for 10 men to sleep. The workers only provide their own accommodation if they prefer to do so. They get no extra pay for this.

*Sub-Letting.*—The maistry says the coolies are so thick on the ground that there is no chance of this. All the same, we heard a rumour that outside coolies sometimes share these quarters.

*Eviction.*—Only if dismissed from employ.

*Health.*—The work is in the open and not of an unhealthy kind. The women struck us as very small. A doctor (Indian) is employed full time by Messrs. Bulloch Bros. and is under the supervision of an English doctor. There is a dispensary at the mill. Use is made of the doctor for minor ailments, but the people try to keep him from knowing of infectious illnesses like small-pox. There is no women doctor. Municipal midwives visit free of charge, *dais* have to be paid for, but the majority prefer to do without either as they are prejudiced against the midwives and do not wish to pay the *dai*.

*Maternity Benefit.*—None.

*Disease.*—No hookworm. There is generally an epidemic of small-pox every year. This is difficult to check, as they hide from the doctor. When a case is discovered the Corporation is called in to clean and disinfect the quarter.

#### APPENDIX C.

##### Adamjee Haji Dawood's Match Factory.

This was visited after permission had been obtained. The party were met by the Manager and escorted round the factory.

There were 650 women employed in the factory, almost all Burmese. 150 women were under the direct control of the Manager, and 500 were under a Burmese Maistry.

The work consists of making match boxes, filling them by hand, labelling, and packing.

*Housing.*—Some coolie lines are provided but most of the workers live in their own homes, the average rent being from Rs. 8 to Rs. 9 per mensem.

*Health.*—The general standard of health seemed good, and the working conditions were satisfactory. The women worked in large sheds fairly well ventilated.

There is a qualified doctor on the staff.

There are 20 separate latrines for women emptied twice a day by the Corporation. There is good drinking water, and bathing facilities are being provided in the near future.

There are no disease statistics, but detailed figures were going to be kept by the new Manager and would be available next year.

*Maternity Benefit.*—None.

*Welfare Work.*—None.

*Education.*—None.

There is First-Aid available and conditions are not dangerous.

*Hours.*—The maximum hours are 11 hours a day and 60 hours a week. There is an interval of 1½ hours during the day but the women may work then if they wish to. The factory is closed on Sundays and for all main holidays, Mahomedan, Hindu, Burmese and Christian. 45 girls and 53 boys duly registered are employed. They do not work more than 36 hours a week with an average wage of Rs. 18 per month. Whole families are engaged in the factory and the children would not be employed unless the rest of the family were working there.

*Wages.*—They are paid monthly. The average wage is annas 14 a day and between Rs. 15 and Rs. 20 a month. A bonus is paid both to time and piece workers whereby 50 per cent. to 100 per cent. increase may be earned in a month. 50 per cent. is the usual amount.

The conditions in this factory seem good, and the workers are paid a small retaining fee if the works have to close down temporarily for any reason. I

## APPENDIX D.

## D. E. Attia's Rope Factory.

Visited on Tuesday, February 17th, by permission.

We only saw from 25—30 women, the usual number employed was 70. This was due to the works being closed 3 or 4 days a week owing to trade depression. The women are all Burmese and the majority come in by the day. The work consists of joining strands of fibre into long lengths which are then tied into bundles ready for the machines.

*Housing.*—Quarters are provided by the proprietor and are large with verandahs in front. We were told that only 10 or 12 people lived on the premises but there were certainly many more than that when we saw the quarters, and accommodation existed for well over 50. The quarters were very dirty with all kinds of refuse and broken glass and brick lying about. When we spoke of this, we were told that as the inmates were all Burmans, we could not expect the quarters to be clean. One sweeper was provided. The average rent for busties outside is about Rs. 4 a month.

*Health.*—Conditions were healthy in the dry weather at all events as the women work in large sheds entirely open on one side. They could have been equally healthy in the quarters if they had been clean and litter cleared away.

The general physique of the women was very fair.

No medical facilities are provided, but when the women are ill they are sent to the Dufferin Hospital and go willingly.

There are 16 latrines for women cleared by the Municipality.

Drinking water seemed good and washing and bathing places were provided near the sheds but at some distance from the quarters.

*Disease.*—There had been a bad epidemic of cholera 10 or 12 years ago, but no records were kept.

*Maternity Benefits.*—The proprietor at his own discretion gives money at childbirth to those who need it.

*Welfare Work.*—None.

*Education.*—None.

*Safety.*—The work is not dangerous. There is no First-Aid.

*Hours.*—The regular hours of work are from 6—11 and from 1—5 p.m., but the majority of women who are on piece work, work as they feel inclined and not usually all day.

The works are closed on Sundays and on the main holidays.

*Children.*—We saw from 10—15 small children helping their mothers in joining rope.

These are not paid. The work was not hard and as long as they were not kept at it for too long, seemed unobjectionable.

*Wages.*—The average pay when the factory is working full time is Rs. 12 a month, but there are 14 women on Rs. 16 a month.

The majority join the fibre into lengths and then into bundles, the rate of pay being As. 2 a bundle. A full-time worker will do 5—6 bundles a day. There are no women on the machines but we saw two in the packing department. The piece work is paid once a fortnight and the time labour every ten days.

## APPENDIX E.

## Messrs. E. E. Madha's Umbrella and Soap factory.

Visited by permission.

88 Women are employed under the direct control of the manager, but no children. They are all Burmese. The work consists of putting covers on umbrellas which have already been machined by men. The work is piece work.

*Housing.*—Housing is not provided. The women live near the factory in busties the average rent being Rs. 2 to Rs. 3 a month.

*Health.*—The general physique of the women seemed good and, according to the books, few women stayed away on account of illness.

Working conditions were satisfactory, men and women being together in one big shed moderately well ventilated. The women were rather crowded.

There are no medical facilities.

There are 5 latrines for women in 2's and 3's, but women were seen to use those marked for men as they were all together.

Tube well water is provided but no facilities for bathing or washing as the women live out.

No statistics are kept of disease or epidemics but the attendance seemed regular.

*Maternity Benefits.*—None.

*Welfare Work.*—None.

*Education.*—None.

*First-Aid* None.

*Hours.*—Average 10 hours a day and 60 hours a week. The factory is open at 6 a.m. but does not start officially till 7 a.m. It is closed from 12—2 and the day ends at 6 p.m. It is shut on Fridays and for Mahomedan holidays.

Children are not employed.

*Wages.*—All is piece work and the pay varies from 5 annas to Re. 1 a day.

Half anna is paid for each umbrella covered and the average is ten a day.

The wages are paid every ten days, and average is Rs. 6, which is about Rs. 18 a month.

Advances are made, when reasonable, by the manager.

*Soap factory.*—No women are employed.

## APPENDIX F.

### Jeewanlal and Co's. Alluminium Factory

There are 60 women employed, all Burmese with the exception of one Coringhi woman. They are under the direct control of the manager. The work is nearly all unskilled such as stamping the name on pots, polishing the inside of pots and washing and packing them. The washers are slightly better paid, the women get half anna a day more. There is possibly a certain amount of danger as the pots before being washed by hand go first into caustic soda and then into nitric acid. If they were dropped the women who sit immediately behind the baths would easily get splashed. There were ten doing this work. There is no piece work.

*Housing.*—No housing is provided, the women living in busties for which the average rent is from Rs. 2 to Rs. 3 a month.

*Health.*—The working conditions were satisfactory. The majority of the women, with the exception of those washing were old and the general physique not so good as that in the umbrella factory. This may be accounted for by the fixed wage of As. 8 a day.

A Civil Surgeon comes round once a week, and there is a dispensary where prescriptions, etc., can be made up. This is used.

There are 4 separate latrines for women.

Good water from an artesian well is provided but there are no bathing or washing facilities as the women live out.

No epidemics seem to have occurred lately.

*Maternity Benefits.*—None.

*Welfare Work.*—None.

*Safety.*—There is First-Aid available and a qualified man in charge.

*Hours.*—9 hours a day from 6-30—11 a.m. and 1—5-30 p.m. The factory is closed on Sundays and for the chief holidays.

Children not employed.

*Wages.*—The pay is As. 8 a day, but one woman working a machine gets As. 12. There is no piece work. The wage is paid weekly (Rs. 14 a month). Advances are made up to Rs. 3 a month.

## APPENDIX G.

### Industries not inspected under the Factory Act.

#### (1) Bean picking and sorting Industry.

The industry does not come under the Factory Act as no machinery is used, so is not inspected. The work which consists of picking over the beans and sorting out stones and rubbish of all kinds, is done by men, women and children who come down from up-country. It is the custom for whole families to come to Rangoon after the paddy season is over. The regular season lasts for about 4½ months, from December to April, and there is usually a short season in October. One shed we visited seemed to contain all the inhabitants of a village up the Pegu river who come down regularly each year.

*Housing.*—The workers sleep and eat in the sheds, where they sort beans, and seemed perfectly content. They were not charged rent for this accommodation.

*Health.*—The families we saw seemed healthy.

There are no medical facilities.

Latrines are provided and the river is available for washing.

*Maternity Benefits.*—None.

*Welfare Work.*—None.

*Hours.*—The hours are from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., but as the work is paid by the bag, the workers go off when they feel like it.

*Wages.*—The average pay is from 10 to 12 annas a day though a good worker may get as much as Rs. 1-8-0.

The surroundings outside the sheds were unpleasantly dirty and in the rains must be a quagmire.

## (2) The Sangu Valley Cheroot Industry.

We went over these workshops in Pazundaung and saw the women at work. Some were stripping the leaves, the stalks of which are sold at few annas a viss for filling the large country cheroots. Others were cutting the leaves while the majority were rolling them into cheroots.

Working conditions were good. The rooms where the majority of girls were working was large, airy and well lighted, opening on to a flat roof where the tobacco was drying. We saw from 40—50 women working.

Pay averaged Rs. 50 a month. Cheroot-makers are expected to make 400 cheroots per day. As. 10 per day deducted for absence.

## APPENDIX H.

### B. O. C. Candle Factory, Syriam.

At the time of visiting, 167 women were employed, all were engaged either in packing candles or in carton making. All are Burmans, under a Burman woman supervisor. There are no children employed.

*Housing.*—The B. O. C. do not provide quarters for their women employees. They live for the most part in the village. No inspection was made of their houses.

*Health.*—The general physique seemed good; there is nothing in the conditions of work of an unhealthy nature; the workshops are well ventilated and punkhas are provided in one shed. There is a dispensary at the oil refinery near by. A full-time doctor is in attendance. If any case of illness occurs in the candle factory itself, the woman is taken up to the dispensary, by ambulance if necessary. If they are taken ill in their own homes, they can go to the dispensary if they like. The majority do not like.

There are no maternity benefits. There is a very good hospital at Syriam, where they can go for confinements free of charge. There is also a woman doctor at the hospital. The women however make little use either of the hospital or the woman doctor.

*Sanitary arrangements.*—

There is a ten-seat latrine at the factory, flushed.

Drinking water is provided.

A stand pipe is provided near the latrine.

There is no provision for bathing as yet.

*Hours.*—46 hours a week, i.e., 8 hours a day and 6 hours on Saturday. There is no work on Sunday, and there is a daily interval from 10-30 to 12-30. As the women are on piece work, some of them do work in these hours, but they are not encouraged to do so.

*Leave.*—They are given 3 days leave a year for the three chief Burmese Festivals on full pay, i.e., 13 annas a day. If work is essential on these days they get double pay.

*Wages.*—All is piece work, except the supervisor on Rs. 60 a month. They are paid monthly on about the 9th day of the month.

*Average earnings.*—The carton makers are paid 4 annas for 1,000 cartons.

*Specimen Figures.*

<i>Packers</i>	..	Average number of working days is 22½ per mensem. Maximum number of working days is 25½ per mensem.
<i>Wages</i>	..	Average earning is Rs. 21-15-0 per mensem. Maximum earning is Rs. 36-13-0 per mensem.
<i>Carton makers</i>	..	Average number of working days is 21½ per mensem. Maximum number of working days is 24½ per mensem.
<i>Wages</i>	..	Average earning is Rs. 26-9-0 per mensem. Maximum earning is Rs. 54-4-0 per mensem.

## APPENDIX K.

## Housing in Mills.

The following is a description of a visit to typical coolie lines, in two different mills, made on Tuesday, August 19th, 1930.

The first lines we inspected were in a shocking condition. They were old barracks made of corrugated iron sheets and built on piles about 12 feet from the ground; the wooden stairs were falling to pieces and unsafe. Originally the size of the rooms may have been 40 by 20 feet but it was difficult to tell, as each room was a perfect rabbit warren divided and subdivided with matting and corrugated iron into cubicles about 10 by 8 feet in size. The windows were small, only two feet square, and would always be shut in wet weather as the rain would otherwise drive in. The only ventilation then would come from the roof. The two, and in some cases three, inner cubicles had no light and no fresh air; in some cases matting also covered the tops of these cubicles, so the area, often occupied by man, woman and child would be 8 by 6 by 6 feet with no ventilation at all. The outside cubicles were much better off, with a window. We were told that subdividing and putting up partitions was not allowed, but as all these were married quarters, this method was the only means of ensuring privacy. The whole building was in an unbelievable state of disrepair. The flooring was in some places almost non-existent while every cubicle must have had at least six rotten planks with gaping holes, through which refuse and water were simply shot down beneath, where they accumulated and decomposed. Everything was falling to pieces, and nothing could be done to improve matters. Why these buildings had not been condemned by the Corporation is a mystery. At the end of one block, we saw a room not partitioned off which was used by men only. This improved matters considerably, though here too the floor was rotting away. The adjoining line was even worse than the first, and was full of women and children. The atmosphere was extremely bad, and the heat in the hot weather must be intense. That of course is the reason of the roof matting. There is a certain amount of cooking accommodation below but this is not enough, and is not much used, the families prefer to make fires in their rooms (also against regulations). This seems to be a question of caste.

*Sanitation.*—There are two latrines with accommodation for 32. The women's latrine is joined on to one end of the men's and has no notice that it is for women only. There were four buckets missing in the women's latrine inspected. The Corporation carts collect twice a day. There were 2 water taps for the whole line, the second having been recently installed. The one bathing place for men, women and children was about 4 by 6 feet in size, and was blocked. There is no system of drainage at all. Water is led through bamboo troughs to the front of the quarters where it is kept in barrels for drinking. The conditions of these quarters are reported regularly by the engineer but nothing has been done to improve matters. The manager admitted that he had never been over them before.

The water is Corporation water.

There are only Tamils living here, and the number is roughly several hundreds. Children are born in these surroundings. The mothers are often back at work two days after confinement. There are no maternity benefits.

On the opposite side of the road were lines for Telugus. These were far more up to date, and in a good state of repair. We saw no broken flooring. These lines were built on concrete of wood and corrugated iron, and were two storeys high. The rooms were airy and except where subdivided were more or less satisfactory. The outside rooms with windows were good and apparently appreciated by the occupants who had whitewashed the walls and made the place into quite a comfortable home. This was not an exception, showing that improved conditions will result in a higher standard of living.

There were cooking facilities which are extensively used. We saw no washing accommodation. These people have to use latrines on the far side of the lines, but there are some on the river bank where they work. It must be remembered that we saw over these lines in the slack season. In the busy season the overcrowding must be appalling.

The next mill we visited we were met by an Indian doctor. He has been there for 20 years. The first thing we saw was a turn-table. This was full of water covered with green slime. We were told it was not possible to prevent this in the rains, but we wondered why it could not be drained. The first lines we saw were an improvement on the other mill. Each room had a window at the back, and a window and door in the front with a half division in the middle. They seemed in good condition, but we could not see much. Electric light of a low voltage was supplied if paid for. There were up-to-date cook houses between the first and second lines, which were used for cooking. There was a concrete pathway and pucca drains, but the concrete needed repairing in the path. There was a water tap between each double line. The accommodation was fairly adequate except where the rooms were subdivided and overcrowding resulted. The next lines were of an older pattern and were double storeyed. These had cook houses between the lines which were not used by the occupants of the upper floor. Here cooking was done on the verandahs or in the rooms.

Half the Chittagonian quarters were being used by Telugus and their families, and here again the large rooms on the first floor, adequate for single men, were quite unsuitable for married families who divided them up into cubicles, which got little ventilation. On the opposite side we went into a superior dwelling place occupied by the clerk who draws Rs. 90 per mensem. The cooking was done in the house. There was enough space unless he took people in to share in the busy season. There was no through ventilation, but there was a side window as it was an end house. Next door was a rabbit warren containing five families; the room had been subdivided with sacking into five cubicles and was very dark. There was no through ventilation. Many of the cook houses had been matted in and in several cases corrugated iron had been put up to make into living quarters. We were told it was to help cooking, but investigation showed a bed, etc.

The washing facilities were insufficient. There were 3 taps of water in the middle of a concrete square. This was for all the men, women and children.

*Latrines.*—These were flushed every ten minutes, and were a satisfactory type but insufficient in number. There were only six for women, three each side. There were 28 for the men. In the busy season there are about 200 women.

*Disease.*—No records kept. The bad cases are sent to hospital. They never go voluntarily to the doctor.

*Maternity.*—Babies are born in the lines attended either by *dais* or their own doctors. The mill doctor has never attended a confinement.

The chief trouble here is lack of adequate supervision.

#### APPENDIX L.

The following is a description of a visit to modern coolie lines, made on 26th August 1930.

These are new lines erected in 1928, at a cost of Rs. 44,000, to house about 146 employees. Plans are under consideration for the further accommodation of just over 1,000 workers, single and married, and it is hoped to begin building shortly. An expenditure of 2 or 3 lakhs of rupees is anticipated.

The inspection of these lines was a pleasure. It is not surprising that 99 per cent. of the employees wish to live in the lines. They are built on a brick foundation with concrete floors and passage ways and corrugated iron partitions. The line is divided into quarters of two rooms with a wide passage between them for through ventilation. The rooms are roughly 15 by 20 feet and have two windows 6 by 4 feet with ventilation above the windows and doors and through draught from front to back. The rooms are lofty but even here we found several roofed in with matting, probably for the sake of coolness. These rooms are for five single men or one family, and the accommodation is ample. If overcrowding is detected, the durwan incharge of each set of rooms is fined. The rooms are whitewashed twice a year, and are clean and tidy. The average pay of the occupants was from Rs. 40 to 90 per mensem.

*Sanitary arrangements.*—Entirely satisfactory. There was adequate drinking water and three taps for washing. Water is turned on here twice a day before and after working hours. There is a small enclosed washing place for women.

Latrines are modern and regularly water flushed. There is a notice above those for women and above those for men. There are separate cooking facilities, usually one or more to each room, and a special place for cleaning fishing.

The part where the cooking houses, latrines and washing places are situated is all brick paved and sloping to ensure drainage.

*Medical supervision.*—The doctor inspects twice a day and if refuse of any kind is found outside rooms, the head of that room is fined. Cases of illness are sent to hospital. At present there are only a few women, and no births have occurred, during the employment of the present doctor.

Metal refuse bins with lids are outside every quarter, and we found them all closed. At the end of the lines there was separate accommodation for the Jemadars. The cook house, latrine and water tap were all partitioned off from the Burmese living next to them.

*Sick benefits.*—The employees are on full pay for the whole of their convalescence after accidents of any kind, and for a limited time for sickness. They may subscribe to a provident fund where the Company doubles the contribution of the employee.

There is no work on Sundays except in an emergency when pay at the rate of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  is given and a free day during the week.

All labour is paid direct and not through maistries. This plan works well.

## APPENDIX M.

*Night visit to inspect Housing.*—We went to 27th Street on the night of Friday, August 8th. This street is the centre of the Ooriya quarters, and Friday is the day before many of them embark for India on their return journey. Recently an Ooriya welfare society has been formed by some of the leaders of the men, to safeguard the more ignorant workers from the more obvious dangers. There are a good many lodging houses in this street where men can get a night's lodging or where they may live for an indefinite period. When a man first lands in Rangoon from the North Coromandel Coast he stays a night or two in Rangoon and is charged As. 4 a night. On his return to his country he is more heavily charged, for although the nominal price of one night's board and lodging is only Rs. 1-4-0, in addition he has to pay various sums to various 'charities' (most of which begin and end at home!) and he also pays for the women attached to each establishment, either living there or brought in, whether he wants to or not. He is most probably robbed in other ways as well. We went over several of the houses which usually consist of two rooms downstairs roughly 15 by 20 feet including the kitchen at the back, the water tap and the latrine. The only light and air comes from the front door, which has a small grill over it. During the rains the door is usually shut, so that ventilation is only possible through the grill. The opening, if there ever was one, at the back, seemed hermetically sealed in every house we saw. The following is a typical example of many which were visited by us: There were thirty men on the ground floor lying asleep on the floor or cooking. There was one woman living there in a corner of the room partitioned off with sacking. These rooms were not fifteen feet wide and were in a very bad condition. Scaffolding was round the upper rooms though they were still occupied while earthquake repairs were being carried on. The rent for each room was Rs. 60 per mensem, and Rs. 190 for three. There was no water on the second or third floors, as the taps never flowed except on the ground floor. There is no outlet or ventilation whatsoever in the bathing place or in the latrine, nor any door. Rents are all extremely high, and as the lodging house keeper finds it a profitable job, it follows that the Ooriya coolie pays the high rent and the profit. In almost every house we saw one and sometimes two women. The upper floor of one house was inspected where there was certainly more ventilation as the shutters were open. At the end of the main room was a small one, the only one we saw with a door, where a woman was sleeping. Women are sometimes brought in from the outlying districts. The Ooriyas are Brahmins and do not bring their womenfolk with them from India, hence these arrangements. The whole street was much interested in our expedition but were perfectly civil and showed us all we asked to see. The Ooriyas seem to have few personal belongings, while the Telugus whom we visited in 37th Street and 38th Street had much more in the way of family possessions. Some of the houses in 27th Street have two or three storeys, the upper floor being occupied by clerks, as these floors are much superior to the lower ones. But side by side with fairly good houses are slum dwellings of the worst description. Although we saw many rooms crowded to overflowing, we were told that conditions were twice as bad in the busy season. Then the men sleep in the streets. In one room where a corner was partitioned off, a woman with two babies and a child of three were sleeping. There were fourteen men in that room. We next went to 37th Street, but due to the wholesale exodus of Telugus after the riot, we only found two houses inhabited. The house we inspected, 98, 37th Street, was a large pucca built house with similar ones on each side. The ground floor rooms were of the same type as those seen in 38th Street but were larger and loftier. The rent for the ground floor was Rs. 45 per mensem for one room. There were not more than ten people in the house, but the usual number is forty. Again here there is no through ventilation.

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MR. E. J. L. ANDREW, ASSISTANT PROTECTOR OF IMMIGRANTS AND EMI-GRANTS, RANGOON (RETIRED).

## Preamble.

It appears necessary to explain the reasons for my desiring to tender independent evidence before the Royal Commission instead of co-operating with the Local Government or the several local organisations interested in the labour question. The Local Government has a separate labour department, under an officer of the Indian Civil Service, whose primary function is the investigating and collection of information. Although I was till recently in Government service my knowledge and facts on the various problems in connection with labour have been obtained by private enquiries personally carried out and my investigations extended over a fairly considerable period. Many of my facts may not have been acceptable to the department and there may have been conflict of opinion in consequence. But I have not hesitated to assist that department when I was consulted, as was done by two separate officers of the department. As regards private bodies, I am not aware how many and which organisations are submitting evidence, but I would add that I have rendered some assistance to the Council of the National Council of Women in Burma by furnishing them with certain data which they would not ordi-

narily have obtained, also by giving them certain suggestions, and in showing some of the members the housing conditions in certain sections of the City of Rangoon typically labour residential centres.

As regards my knowledge of labour conditions in Rangoon, I would explain that being naturally interested in economic and social problems, I commenced an investigation some 17 or 18 years ago but for some time no system was observed and no defined lines of investigations were laid down or followed. It was not till 1919 when I was appointed Assistant Protector of Immigrants and Emigrants that I first came to realise the real importance of the question and the possibilities that existed for an intensive investigation into the many aspects of the labour problem. My official duties brought me into very close touch with the hundreds of thousands of Indian labourers coming into, and going out of Burma annually. I therefore decided to endeavour to make a close study of labour, concentrating on Indian labour. Possessing a colloquial knowledge of the vernaculars of Indian immigrants—Tamil, Hindustani and Telugu—I was able to converse with the people and by showing a sympathetic attitude I soon gained their trust and confidence. I thus amassed a considerable amount of interesting details on a variety of points. These indicated the particular directions for extending my enquiries. I had further opportunities of carrying out investigations in 1923 when I held the post of Labour Officer. The results of my labour are embodied in my book on "Indian Labour in Rangoon" which the publishers, The Oxford University Press, Calcutta, expect to bring out at the end of this month. I have instructed the publishers to forward an advance copy (complimentary) of my book to reach the Secretary of the Commission at Colombo. I would ask that, if permissible, this written statement may be taken as supplementary to the facts presented in my work.

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### I—Recruitment.

1. (c) As Burma depends so largely on imported Indian labour, it is necessary to review briefly the factors that lead up to the introduction of Indian labour as a permanent institution. In the early days labour was obtained from Upper Burma. In the 18th century, the migration of Upper Burmans to Lower Burma was due to their conquest of the Talaings. Their migration to the south since the first Anglo-Burmese War of 1824 was due partly to the uncertain and scanty rainfall, but mainly to the insecurity of life and property and the tyranny and oppression of the Burmese Kings, who held their Court at Ava, Amarapura and Mandalay. These Upper Burmans were settled on the land when the fertile districts of the Delta were opened out for cultivation over fifty years ago and to their energy and enterprise is mainly due the subsequent progress and development of this tract. After the British annexation of Upper Burma in 1886, peace and order were established, roads and railways were constructed, and extensive and costly irrigation works were repaired or newly made, as in the Mandalay, Kyaukse, Shwebo and Minbu Districts. The immediate effect of the cutting of the irrigation canals and the consequent availability of a supply of water was to render agricultural practice in these precarious Upper Burma districts more certain and profitable. Another effect was that the price of rice land which at the time of the annexation was scarcely Rs. 5 an acre rose to Rs. 50 and Rs. 100 and the value of paddy correspondingly increased from about Rs. 50 to Rs. 160—200 per 100 baskets. The changed aspect of agricultural conditions in Upper Burma induced many families who had established themselves in the Delta and become affluent to move back to their homes in Upper Burma. This reverse process of immigration from Lower Burma to Upper Burma gradually led to the supply of Upper Burma labour becoming deficient and scanty and alien Indian labour had to be secured to supplement local and indigenous labour necessary for the rapidly expanding area under rice cultivation. Further as the size of individual holdings in Lower Burma is unwieldy, being about 50 acres on an average and beyond the capacity of a family or household to work, the employment of outside labour became essential.

1. (i) As a matter of fact, however, Indian immigration to Burma dates back to the early days of the eighteenth century when people from Chittagong and Madras were accustomed to come across to this Province for trade or employment, the majority going back after the busy season. The greater proportion of these early visitors appear to have been of the better class. The pacification of the country after the second Burmese War—and more particularly the annexation of Upper Burma—was the signal for Indians to migrate to Burma regularly and in increasing numbers, the majority of the immigrants being drawn from the depressed and agricultural labourer classes.

ii) and (iii) The precarious nature of agriculture due to failure of rains, floods or cattle disease, the periodic occurrence of famine or widespread scarcity, and pestilence, such as, plague, cholera or influenza, in India combined with the growing demand in Burma for labour for the development of its agriculture and industries and for the opening up of the country generally are the factors which encourage emigration from India. Further, the provision of easier, cheaper and quicker means of transport also induced emigration.

I attach 4 tables to indicate the extent of immigration. Table A exhibits the movements of the population in the twenty-two years 1908-1929 between Rangoon and all other Ports including the minor ports of the Province. The figures are those recorded at Rangoon through which prac-

tically all the passenger traffic entering or leaving Burma passes. It will be observed that except in 1907 the balance has always been in favour of immigration resulting in a net addition to the population of over a million and a quarter souls in the twenty-two years.

Table B relates exclusively to the passenger traffic between Rangoon and the Ports in India during the sixteen years 1913-1929 for which period alone accurate statistics are available. Immigrants exceeded emigrants by over a million souls during this period. This table is a useful index of Indian migration, besides affording a ready means of determining the actual proportion of the movement of the Indian population to the total movement. A comparison of the figures in Tables A and B will show that Indian migration accounts for considerably more than 94 per cent. of the total immigrant population and for about 90 per cent. of the emigrants. Both tables, however, include cabin passengers; the proportion of which to deck passengers is hardly 2 to every 100. It will be observed that while particulars relating to the sex of the immigrants are furnished in both tables similar details are not available in regard to emigrants. This is due to the fact that all in-coming passengers are subject to medical examination by the Port Health Authorities on arrival at Rangoon while a similar examination is operative only in the case of emigrants proceeding to ports of India. Statistics of emigrants are furnished by steamship companies who do not ordinarily maintain separate records for sexes.

Table C exhibits the actual arrivals from India by deck in the eight years 1921-1929 for which period alone detailed and reliable figures are available, while Table D shows the number that returned to India during the same period.

Indian immigration is migratory and seasonal. It is migratory mainly because of the marked disproportion in the sexes due chiefly to caste prejudice and religious sentiment which prohibit the emigration of women across the sea, particularly in the case of the Hindus. A reference to Table C will indicate this disparity in the sexes. In the eight years 1921-1929 of the arrivals at Rangoon 2,132,992 were adult males against 138,423 adult females, giving a sex rate of one female to every 15 males. This disproportion is not the same for all classes; it is highest in the case of Chittagonians and Uriyas and lowest in the case of Tamils. The abstract below illustrates this phenomenon, the figures against each port indicating the number of male arrivals to every one female.

	1921.	1922.	1923.	1924.	1925.	1927.	1928.	1929.
Calcutta ..	12	16	16.5	17	16	16.7	16.4	14.7
Chittagong ..	35.5	47	50	56	37	50.9	33	26.4
Madras ..	6.5	8	8	9	8	8.1	8.3	10.0
Coromandel ..	18	19	21	20	22	17.6	18.7	19.6

The majority of the Chittagonian arrivals are employed in the sampan and small craft traffic and as engine room and deck crews on ocean going and riverine steamers. The latter obviously have to leave their wives and families behind; the former class usually return to their homes every year and the need of bringing their families across does not arise.

The disproportion in the sexes among this class is actually higher than the above figures would appear to indicate. This is explained by the fact that the figures in Table C include Arakanese and Burmese from the Arakan Coast Ports. A record was maintained by the writer of the actual arrivals from Chittagong during the years 1927, 1928 and 1929 and the result is shown below.

Year.	Males.	Females.	Ratio.
1927 .. ..	31,274	162	193.0
1928 .. ..	38,880	527	73.8
1929 .. ..	41,756	968	43.1
	114,910	1,657	67.5

A considerable number of Tamil agricultural labourers bring their wives and female relations with them; this accounts for the comparatively small sex disproportion among this class. Although Hindus by religion and race, the caste system is not particularly rigid among the labouring class of Tamils who come to Burma. Hindustani labourers have in recent years shown a tendency to bring over their wives and females, but as a considerable number of Uriyas come to Burma via Calcutta their inclusion in the arrivals has tended to raise the sex disproportion in the case of this port. It is unfortunate that separate official records relating to Uriyas coming via Calcutta are not available. But from personal observation and general information the sex ratio of Hindustani immigrants may be said to be about 12 to 1. In order to check this estimate the arrivals from Calcutta by a number of steamers during the period December 1926—November 1927 were closely watched and a count recorded by the writer. Altogether the arrivals by 36 steamers were tallied. The count gave a total of 31,771 persons comprising 29,144 males, 1,675 females and 952 children. Of this number Uriyas from Cuttack, Puri and Berhampore accounted for a total 4,197 of which 21 were females and 41 children. Excluding Uriyas the figures give a sex proportion of 15 males to one female. A separate enumeration was also made during the same period of arrivals from Calcutta by 22 other steamers. No Uriyas came by these

steamers. The enumeration gave a total of 10,483 males, 925 females and 480 children resulting in a sex proportion of 11 males to one female.

The people coming from the Coromandel Ports comprise Uriyas and Telugus (commonly called Coringhis) who are Hindus. The caste and tribal customs among these people are very rigid, especially in this case with the Uriyas, and it is a rare occurrence to find a man bringing his lawful wife across the bay. The women that come across are generally those who have been ostracized or have lost caste as a result of a lapse from virtue or some similar cause. The disproportion of the sexes among these two classes is consequently very high, being about 17 males to one female in the case of the Telugus and 150 to one in the case of Uriyas. An actual count was made of the arrivals from the Coromandel ports during the twelve months, December 1926 to November 1927. In this period the direct arrivals numbered 109,633 males and 5,799 females. Telugus accounted for 75,869 males and 5,558 females, giving a sex ratio of 13.6 males to one female, and Uriyas numbered 34,005 adults of whom only 241 were females, equivalent to 140 males to every female. Including arrivals *via* Calcutta, Uriyas numbered 38,161 adults of whom 37,899 were males and 262 females equal to a ratio of 145 males to one female. A further count was made by the writer during 1928 and 1929. The arrivals from the Coromandel Coast during the two years totalled 190,389, of whom 178,396 were males and 9,201 females. The distribution among the two classes was as follows:—

	Males.	Females.	Ratio.
Telugus	135,646	8,981	15.2
Uriyas	40,750	220	185.2

The migration of Indians is seasonal, that is to say the largest arrivals and departures occur at certain definite periods in the year. November and December are the greatest immigration months from the Coromandel Ports, Madras and Calcutta. Emigration to all these places is heaviest in the period March-May, departures to Calcutta and Madras being largest in May and to Coromandel ports in March. This is partly due to the monsoon conditions in the Bay of Bengal, and partly to the fact that the demand for labour for reaping paddy and for the rice mills commences in November-December. The movements of the population do not, however, imply that large numbers come for a few months only; the departures of March-April are not always the arrivals of the preceding November-December but of some years before that. This fact was verified by a series of enquiries carried out by the writer at various times during the period 1921-1927 among arrivals, departures and those in Rangoon. The average period of stay of most classes of labourers is 3 to 5 years.

2. Only a small percentage of Indians acquire a permanent domicile in Burma. These, belong mostly to the professional or business and clerical classes and to a less degree domestic servants. The majority of the immigrants go back after a stay of from 3 to 5 years and many return after a lapse of a year or two. Indian immigrants therefore do not provide a permanent labour force to the province, primarily because of the frequent change in the personnel of those employed.

3. (i) Before describing the methods of recruitment it is necessary to give a brief sketch of the classes of labour met with in Burma. These may be classed in two main divisions, skilled and unskilled, the latter comprising the greater proportion of immigrant labour. Skilled labour represents labour trained or proficient in some particular branch or section of industry or trade, and it is not to be confused with technical labour which falls in a different category. Unskilled labour is divided into two sub-heads, namely, that which comes of its own free will into the province unfettered by any restrictions or conditions, and that which is brought in under a system of contract through the agency of labour suppliers or contractors.

Skilled labour finds employment in mills, factories and dockyards and in transport operations in railway and shipping circles. In virtue of its character, this class of labour finds ready employment and commands remunerative wages. Moreover, not being fettered by any contracts or agreements inimical to its interests, its economic condition and standard of living is good.

A very large proportion of the unskilled labour which comes to Burma belongs to the class of free labour. Coming in search of work and with no preconceived ideas, it takes up work of any kind to be found from ordinary porter work to such operations as tilling the ground or reaping the crops, on terms which vary from fixed, daily, weekly or monthly wages, with or without a supplement, that is to say, free housing and part rations, to sub-tenancy. A large number secure sub-tenancies on terms which comprise the leasing or renting of a piece of land for varying periods, 3 to 5 years as a general rule, against payment to the owner of a stipulated monthly or annual cash rental, or of a certain portion of the produce arising out of the cultivation of the land. The leases or rentals are invariably subject to renewal on expiry of each period. Under this arrangement the labourer works the land as his own property, paying the land revenue and capitation or *thathameda* tax, as the case may be, and so long as the rent is regularly paid he remains in undisturbed possession of the land.

While a large number engage in the pursuits enumerated above, a by no means negligible proportion take up service as *malis* and domestic servants. Some also take up casual work in hewing wood or supplying water. As a rule, the free unskilled labourer is in as fair an economic position as the free skilled labourer.

Unskilled contract labour is employed in rice mills and in other commercial organisations which obtained their labour by recruitment through the agency of maistries. The condition of this class is infinitely inferior to that of the classes referred to above. It is on this class that attention is focussed. No less than 30,000 labourers belonging to this division are employed in Rangoon alone. They are an illiterate, unorganised and helpless body. They are brought from the Andhra (Telugu) and Tamil districts of the Madras Presidency, and the manner of their recruitment and treatment leaves much to be desired.

Broadly speaking, Indian immigrants are drawn from six main divisions of the people of India, namely, Telugus or Andhras, Uriyas, Tamils, Hindustanis, Bengalis and Punjabis, the two first named classes forming the main labour corps of this province. The term 'Hindustani' which literally means people from the "Hindustan" includes both Hindus and Mahomedans while the expression 'Bengalis' includes Chittagonians who are mostly Mahomedans. The Punjabis come from the Doab of the Punjab and are employed chiefly as artificers, turners, overseers, etc., in railway and motor workshops, dockyards and foundries; some are employed as motor car drivers and a certain number in Upper Burma find employment in conservancy and scavenging work. The majority of the Bengalis are employed in a subordinate capacity in Government or Railway or local fund services or in mercantile offices mostly in the clerical line, but some are shopkeepers or traders. Many are merchants; in fact, Bengalis from the 24 Parganas were originally the principal technical labour employed in factories and workshops in Rangoon. The Chittagonians who come over to Burma are mostly Mahomedans. A large proportion of them are engaged in sampan and small craft traffic and they furnish the bulk of the labour required for ship and launch crews. They are employed as drivers, tindals, oilmen or Khalasis.

The Tamils come from the Southern districts of the Madras Presidency. The middle class of Tamils, like the Bengalis, are employed in the clerical line in Government, railway and mercantile offices. The lower middle and the lower class generally follow agricultural pursuits but are also well represented in rice mills. The Uriyas come mainly from the district of Ganjam in the Madras Presidency and from the Province of Bihar and Orissa. They provide the bulk of the labour required by the Railway and the Public Works Department for rail and road construction and earthwork. They are also employed in mills, dockyards and foundries either as skilled or unskilled workers. The Telugus come principally from the Coromandel Coast and the Ceded Districts, and furnish the bulk of the labour employed in mills and factories and by shipping companies. Many also find work as ordinary porters or carriers and several thousands are engaged as rickshaw pullers and hand-cart men. Those coming from the Nellore District belong to the scavenging class and provide the bulk of the sweepers found in Rangoon and its suburbs. Hindustanis come mainly from the United Provinces and comprise both Hindus and Mahomedans. A large number of both classes take service as *Chaprasis* or peons or watchmen though many are gharri and bullock cart drivers and petty vendors.

The method of recruitment may be briefly described. Mills and large industrial concerns usually employ a labour contractor or maistry whose main duties are to obtain the requisite labour force, to maintain it up to requirements and to generally see that the labourers do their work. When labour is required the mill or firm enters into an agreement with its contractor for the supply of a certain number of labourers for a certain period, stipulating at the same time the rate of wages that will be paid for each class of labour and the remuneration to be paid to the contractor for his services as recruiter. In a few instances, the contractor is given an advance of money for the grant of advances to the labourers and to defray the expenses of their journey from India to Rangoon, the advances being subject to recovery by instalments, without interest. Generally, however, contractors do not ask for or accept advances. They are able to finance the undertaking themselves having amassed much wealth during their past operations or they experience little difficulty in raising what is necessary either from their friend or the Chettyar. This is a very valuable asset and places them in a position of independence.

The Contractor either proceeds to the recruiting centre in India or deposes an agent for the purpose. Labourers are induced to come over with various promises and prospects of good pay, etc., and as a further inducement advances ranging from Rs. 50 to as high as Rs. 300, Rs. 400 sometimes Rs. 500 are given for the liquidation of debts and for the maintenance of their families till the workers are able to make remittances. On being obtained, the requisite number of recruits, including women in several cases, is taken to the nearest port of embarkation and brought across to Rangoon. The contractor or his agent bears all expenses of transport and rationing *en route*. On arrival in Rangoon the labourers are taken to the place of their future activities and set to work.

To safeguard himself the Contractor or his agent insists on the labourers executing a contract or agreement prior to embarkation in the case of those recruited in India, or before entering employment in the case of those recruited locally. Execution of the contract or agreement consists in obtaining the labourer's thumb impression on stamped agreement forms or on blank stamped paper. The agreement constitutes an undertaking to serve the maistry or contractor for a given period, which term, however, is usually not specified at the time. It is also an acknowledgment of debt for a certain sum which is supposed to represent the actual advance received and the cost of food and transportation, but here again, the actual amount of the indebtedness is not

specified and not infrequently it has been known for considerably larger sums to be entered up at a later date. This document now becomes a very valuable weapon in the hands of the maistry or contractor and the enslavement of the labourer actually begins from that date.

Two facts stand out prominently under this system. One is that labourers recruited for service in Burma commences life with the burden of debt. The other is that the labourers are directly under and subject to the control of the maistry or contractor; the labourers, virtually and in fact, are the servants of the maistry and not of the mill or company. The extent to which the labourer is at the mercy of the maistry will be evident from the fact that the maistry controls the disbursement of wages. Services under these conditions naturally give rise to and affords facilities for oppression, extortion and various other abuses. This system of recruitment is commonly known as the "Maistry System" the evils of which are many.

3. (ii) The present method of recruitment of labour for service in Burma is detrimental to the labourers in two important respects. One is that labourers are systematically under-paid, that is to say, they rarely receive the full wages to which they are entitled. The other is the pernicious premium and advance system which result in general indebtedness and oppression bordering on slavery. To remedy the evils, it is necessary to abolish completely the method of recruitment through the agency of maistries, and to provide for the *direct* payment of wages to the workers.

Several schemes suggest themselves but the ideal scheme is undoubtedly the Malayan System of recruitment and control of labour.

Malaya like all other countries dependent on imported labour, experienced constant difficulty in the matter of labour till 1907 when the problem was solved by the institution of the Indian Immigration Fund, which secured a constant supply of imported labour directly available for work on estates and public works. The system is unique and to it is due the comparative freedom and immunity which Malaya has since enjoyed in the matter of labour difficulties. In that year the Indian Immigration Committee was appointed, consisting of officials and non-officials, with the Superintendent of Immigrants (now designated Controller of Labour) as Chairman and an Enactment passed empowering the Committee to levy an assessment on employers based on the amount of work done by all Indian labourers for such employers. The assessment rate is about 2 dollars per quarter per unit of 78 days' work equivalent to an additional charge of 2.5 cents a day to wages of all Indian labourers employed on the estate. The proceeds of the assessments are credited to the Immigration Fund which forms no part of the general revenues of the Government but is administered by the Controller under the authority of the Committee, solely in the interests of the importation of Indian labour. The purposes for which the Fund can be used are specifically defined and include, besides expenses connected with importing labour, "the maintenance of homes for decrepit and unemployed Indian labourers and the children and orphans of Indian labourers", and "repatriation of and assistance to Indian labourers in need of relief". Until some six years ago most of the expenses of administering the Fund were borne by the Government, which also paid the salaries of the officials in India, maintained the Emigration Camps there and paid the annual subsidy to the B. I. S. N. Company for the carriage of emigrants. The Fund bore the general expenses of recruiting, the principal items being train-fare of emigrants from their homes to the ports of Negapatam or Madras and their feeding in the Emigration Camps at these places while awaiting shipment, passages from Madras or Negapatam to the Straits, expenses of quarantine on arrival at Penang, Port Swettenham or Singapore, transport thence to their places of employment in Malaya and the payment of the recruiting allowances—ten dollars—to the employers by whose agents they had been recruited. The financial relations between Government and the Fund have since been revised and the expenses of administration, the steamer subsidy, the maintenance of the Emigration Camps and all expenditure that can be considered to fall under the head of "recruitment" as distinguished from "protection" have been transferred to the Fund.

Labour is recruited by agents known as kanganyas. These men are sent over to India by individual employers to recruit for their particular places of employment and receive remuneration in the form of commission from these employers. The recruiting allowance paid to the employer is intended to recoup him for this expenditure and other incidental costs not met from the Fund. No license to recruit is granted to a kangany who is not an Indian of the labouring class and who has not been employed as a labourer on the place of employment for which he intends to recruit for a period of not less than three months. Licenses are issued by the Deputy Controller of Labour and endorsed by the Agent of the Government of India. Each kangany is authorised to recruit in the first instance up to twenty labourers while the maximum commission is limited to Rs. 10 per head for each labourer recruited. On arrival in India the kangany takes his license for registration to the office of the Malayan Emigration Commissioner in Madras or to the Assistant Emigration Commissioner in Negapatam. Only on endorsement by one or other of these officials does the license become valid. The period of currency of a license is usually for six months and is limited for one year. After having registered his license the usual routine is for the kangany to proceed to the offices of Messrs. Binny and Company, Madras, Messrs. Madura Company, Negapatam, who are the agents of the B. I. S. N. Company and who generally act as financial agents in India for employers in Malaya. There is no obligation to employ

either of these firms and at various times other arrangements have been made by individual employers, but in practice the two firms enjoy a virtual monopoly. After receiving an advance (usually about Rs. 20) from the financial agents the kangany proceeds to his own village to recruit. When recruits are obtained each is given a copy of the official pamphlet containing information about Malaya, the rate of wages, the hours of work, etc., and a receipt taken. The recruits are then taken before the Village Munsiff or Headman who, after satisfying himself that there is no valid objection to the person emigrating, initials the entry of the recruit's name on the back of the license. When the necessary recruits have been collected the kangany takes them to the port of embarkation, Madras or Negapatam, either himself prepaying the train fare which he afterwards recovers, or getting the fares paid by one of the Recruiting Inspectors (of whom there are fourteen) employed by the Fund. Before embarkation all emigrants are inspected by the officials of the Indian Government—the Protector of Emigrants and the Medical Inspector. After the emigrants are embarked, unless he is himself returning to the Straits when he is paid the balance due to him on arrival, the kangany received his commission less the amount advanced to him by the financial agents.

Besides the emigrants recruited by the kangany for individual employers, any *bonafide* agricultural labourer who is physically fit, on application to the Emigration Commissioner or his Assistant, can obtain a free passage to Malaya at the expense of the Fund, without incurring any obligation to labour for any particular employer on arrival. The number of these voluntary emigrants has been steadily increasing. They are mostly returning emigrants who are proceeding to their places of employment and as they are not recruited neither kangany's commission nor recruiting allowance is payable. The number of Indian labourers, both recruited and voluntary migrating to the Straits for work has not exceeded on an average 75,000 persons (including about 10,000 minors) annually, a number which is only about one-fourth of the number of immigrants arriving in Rangoon from India every year. The great majority of immigrants to the Straits are persons from Southern India.

Under the terms of the contract with the British India Steam Navigation Company Government guarantees to take 35,000 tickets annually. The agreement which is for a combined mail and immigrant service provides for a five years' contract for a fortnightly service. The service has worked well and there has been no shortage in the number of tickets taken. These are the essential points in the Malayan system, a special feature of which is the increasing tendency towards the improvement of the sex-ratio, which has now reached the satisfactory figure of one female to every three male arrivals. As a further operation it is only necessary to refer to the census figures for 1911 and 1921, the sex-ratio of the Indian population on estates improving from one female and three males to one female and 1.8 males in the decennium.

The Immigration Fund has been entirely self-supporting and now has to its credit over two million dollars practically all in liquid assets.

The adoption of a scheme of reform for the recruitment and control of labour in Burma on the lines of the Malayan system should not prove insuperable from the administrative, economic, political and legislative aspects. With the separation of Burma from India under a Governor who is to be absolutely independent of the administrative and legislative control of the Government of India the adoption of such a scheme is simplified.

The scheme would also be useful in effecting a control on the indiscriminate immigration of a class of people that Burma does not need. Indian labour is essential to Burma but the large army of cripples, beggars, ne'er-do-wells, political agitators and men seeking clerical and similar posts are not wanted. The Province would be immeasurably better off without people of this type. A considerable section of Burmese public opinion has recently been agitating for the restriction of Indian immigration. A scheme of recruitment on the lines of the Malayan system would automatically restrict immigration to the limits of actual requirements. It would therefore, it is believed, meet with popular approval and support of the Burmese people. With the separation of Burma from India the Indian cry for an Indian Assistant Protector of Immigrants and Emigrants should disappear. Indeed, the necessity for such an appointment would cease to exist.

4. The uncertainty of securing early employment and of their stay in Burma coupled with the inability to defray the expenses of transport, and in some instances caste prejudice, are factors which operate in preventing the more from bringing their wives and families along with them. The absence of house accommodation suitable for family life is another factor. These causes account for the disparity in the sexes referred to previously. There is then an entire absence of home life among these people and it is therefore not surprising that prostitution is rife among them resulting in the prevalence of venereal disease among a large proportion of Telugus and Uriyas in particular. Polyandry or plurality of husbands is sometimes practised but it is not extensive as some people think. It is not uncommon for groups of 15 or 20 or more Indian labourers—particularly among Tamils and Telugus—to live together and to include a single woman in the company. She is not plurally married to the men; wife to one, she is the housekeeper to the others. In Rangoon one frequently comes across a group of unattached Telugu labourers including a woman as house-keeper. She occupies the same room but enjoys a certain amount of

privacy. If no alliance previously exists with any of the men, in course of time she accepts the position of a wife to one of her own choice still maintaining her rôle as house-keeper. Such relationship is acknowledged by the others who thus virtually become lodgers in the household. Occasionally a woman so circumstanced drifts into promiscuous relations with others in the group and is recognised as their common wife.

An effect of this life of enforced celibacy is the system of keeping mistresses which has grown up in recent years. In many cases the alliance is based on sentiment. The tie is not a legal one and is not recognised, and either party is free to form a new alliance. When the man lives in a barrack or shares a room with other men, the woman usually assumes control of food arrangements. She feeds the other men at a fixed rate per month and carries on the arrangement as a business proposition. When an alliance is dissolved by mutual consent the custom, particularly among the Tamils, is to compensate the women with a gift of money or jewellery. Men living under such an arrangement invariably do not make remittances for the support of their lawful wives and families in India as practically their entire earnings are handed over to their mistresses.

The absence of home life, bad housing, long hours of toil, the absence of leisure necessary for the revival of physical and mental powers and the lack of recreation for the occupation of the mind are all factors which contribute to make life a drab and listless existence for these miserable people. Many men and women of this class in course of time fall easy victims to the drink evil, and on an average 15 to 30 per cent. of their hard earned wages is spent on alcoholic drink, some take to opium or ganja as well, and sooner or later become dope fiends. It must be understood that the entire body of Indian immigrants is not addicted to the drink habit. This is literally true of the men of the cobbler and scavenging classes who must have their daily quota of toddy (a natural liquor obtained from the toddy or palmyra palm) or *Blacra* (a country liquor made from fermented rice) as long as they have funds. The other working classes as a rule indulge in drink on every pay day when they have a gala-day of feasting and drinking.

As indicated above prostitution is customary among practically all classes of the Indian labouring population and a considerable trade is carried on in the procurement of women and young girls. There is a ready market, brothel-keepers being always on the alert to purchase fresh girls and in many cases proprietors of houses of ill-faw either themselves make trips to India to obtain women and girls for their brothels or employ regular paid agents for the purpose. In a number of cases it was discovered that the girls, daughters of respectable but poverty stricken families whose fathers are in Burma, were induced to come to Burma on false promises of marriage or work or other inducements. The trade in the procurement of girls is most common among the Telugus. One very pitiable case came under the personal notice of the writer in most unexpected circumstances. A man about 40 years of age once met a girl in a brothel. For some unaccountable reason he took a strong fancy to her and she to him, and as she was very young, about 16, and of prepossessing appearance and he was her first customer, he quickly arranged to purchase her for a large sum. He took her away to his house and in course of time she became enceinte. It was only then that the man unexpectedly discovered to his horror that the girl was his own child. She was only a year or two when he left his village to come to Burma and he had never returned to his country in all that time. How many other similar cases existed it is impossible to tell. The truth is seldom known. But there is little doubt that the absence of men from their families for protracted periods has a baneful effect on the family life.

7. It is difficult to define the actual extent of unemployment among the immigrant Indian population, chiefly owing to its mobility. But generally speaking, from observation, experience and investigations, it may be said that only a small proportion, roughly about 5 per cent., are out of employment at any given time. This is explained by the fact that such persons take up any casual work, such as coolies, hand-cart pullers, porters, etc., till they get regular employment in their particular lines. Rice mills work short time and rarely at night during the off season. The surplus labour is temporarily thrown out of employ and the men engage in the pursuits described above, while the women earn a precarious living gathering drift wood along the foreshore of the river, refuse from the saw-mills, coal dust from the depot and waste salt at the landing stage of the warehouses and selling these by house to house hawking. They also become petty vendors of pickles, kerosene oil for lamps, etc.

Cases of dismissals generally occur only among the baggage coolies of steamship companies but in the majority of cases the dismissals are the direct result of the evils of the maistry system. Accidents account for cases of unemployment but invariably some compensation is paid to the injured. One well-known European firm in lieu of paying compensation to a worker injured in the performance of his work has given some other work of a light nature without any reduction in wages. This firm gives unemployment pay during sickness in hospital. The period is generally 10 days but is longer according to the length of service and conduct of the worker.

8. In rice mills a more or less small permanent labour force recruited through the agency of maistries, is maintained all the year round. For the busy season November-May a considerably larger body of men and women are recruited locally, also through the agency of contractors or

maistree. The personnel of this temporary or casual labour staff consequently varies from year to year, though several of the old employees of the mill return for work in the rice-milling season.

About 250 coolies comprise the strength of the permanent dock staff of the Contractor of the Port Commissioners. These men ordinarily vacate their work on proceeding to their country. They return after about 2 to 4 years of work. The contractor employs a larger temporary staff daily. The number varies from day to day according to requirements. The same men are invariably so employed but a considerable number work only for a short time and seek other work. The menial labour staff employed by the Port Commissioners is permanent.

Practically all stevedores maintain a small permanent staff for work all the year round. When work is exceptionally heavy extra gangs are engaged and their services are dispensed with immediately the pressure is eased.

The greatest extent of casual employment is to be found among rickshaw and hand-cart pullers. The men do not follow this profession for any length of time and new recruits are constantly flowing in to replace those who have given up rickshaw or hand-cart pulling after working at it for a short time. It is estimated, about 10,000 immigrant Indians are engaged in these occupations.

### III.—Housing.

16. (i) All mills and factories do not provide their workers with housing accommodation ; only some do.

The Corporation of Rangoon provides housing accommodation for the conservancy staff.

The Port Commissioners provide housing accommodation, partly in Rangoon and partly at King's Bank across the river for lascars, khalassis, etc.

(iii) Private landlords do not build in order to provide accommodation for the labouring class. The type of building generally erected is on the tenement or block plan. Any one is free to rent these.

(iv) Only a few, principally clerks, put up their own houses for their exclusive use.

(17) No facilities exist for acquisition of land for workers' houses. Land values and cost of development are high and the Development Trust recoups its outlay by charging premises and ground rents.

18. As the housing accommodation provided is so limited, the great majority of Indian labourers are obliged to make their own arrangements for housing themselves in the city. As men *individually* cannot afford to rent a room, the practice has grown up of several clubbing together and hiring a tenement room, about 20 or 25 feet by 12 feet in size, for their common habitation, and sharing the rental equally. This practice has led to excessive overcrowding ; frequently as many as 20 or more people may be found in occupation of a tenement room, originally intended to house only 4 or 6 persons. The lack of space is not so pronounced during the day as most of the labourer occupiers are away at work, but at night the problem becomes so acute that in the hot weather many of the occupants have to resort to sleeping in the open, on the roadside or on the pavements just outside their rooms. Apart from the overcrowding, these rooms are dark, dirty and badly ventilated. Possessing no windows or other means of ventilation except the doors at either end, living in such rooms is rendered highly insanitary and dangerous, particularly during the monsoon when the doors have to be closed to prevent the rain beating in and when all the occupants are obliged to sleep indoors. Constant inhalation of foul air and noxious vapours emanating from the roadside drains, or sleeping in the hot fetid and suffocating atmosphere of congested rooms affect the health of the occupants.

Housing in Rangoon formed the subject of a recent investigation by the Rangoon Social Service League of which the writer is a member of the Committee. The Committee of the League visited several localities in various parts of the town and the facts noted during such inspections are recorded in a report recently published. In the Lanmadaw quarter the Committee found the buildings to be "insanitary" in every respect, the latrines being particularly "bad", the drainage ineffective, the ventilation insufficient, the back drainage spaces appalling and congestion most marked, "the number of individuals living in a single room" being excessive. In Ahlone the Committee found "very many old houses whose construction is very faulty and the general sanitation of which can be described as hopeless. The latrines attached to these houses abut on a drain which runs along the back of a row of houses and access to them is difficult at all times particularly in the rains, "so much so that the contents of the very unsatisfactory wooden receptacles had been spilled into this drain which was in effect nothing other than an open sewer". In another portion of the area visited, the Committee note that "the want of sanitary control can best be exemplified by the fact that the public latrine of the area is so bad that the population uses the adjacent ground as a latrine, so that walking was a matter requiring careful observation."

The Committee also visited six streets in the town itself occupied by the Indian working class. Referring to these visits the Committee write "These places were visited late at night in order to see the actual state of affairs and the following are some of the things which several members of the Committee saw:—

1. As soon as we arrived intimation was passed rapidly that a visit of some persons in authority was taking place and the sleepers swarmed out from the rooms like bees from a hive. The meaning of this is that all the rooms were being overcrowded, and that if the occupiers had remained in them then the owner or the lessee of the room would have been liable to prosecution.

2. In every case the room visited was found to be overcrowded. For example, 25 where 11 were supposed to be; 31 where 11 were supposed to be, etc., etc.

3. In certain cases we found what are known as 'married quarters', that is to say a bed hung with old sack cloth (gunny bags) or other tough curtains in which a man and his wife slept. These were in immediate juxtaposition with rows of non-married males lying in all directions.

4. In certain cases again we found apparently single women hidden away underneath a cot on which a male was sleeping and having alongside of them the usual lines of males who are presumably without their wives, assuming them to have been married. Under such conditions it is impossible for any female to remain a woman for any length of time; of necessity sooner or later she must become degraded.

5. The ventilation in these places can only be described as non-existent.

6. The general filth is indescribable.

7. The strain on latrine accommodation can be imagined and this in a great measure accounts for the appalling condition of the back drainage spaces.

8. The class of labour housed in these various areas may be divided into *Temporary* and *Permanent*. The former is represented by men who are staying for a few days preparatory to leaving Rangoon; they pay anything from annas 12 to Rs. 1-4-0 for board and lodging per diem. The permanent labourers have to pay the rental of the room to the owner or the lessee; it is obvious therefore that the owner or lessee stands to increase his profit by the extent of overcrowding which he can achieve and because of the concentration of population he has always the means to secure this overcrowding. In plain language both the landlord (when not subject to rent control) and the lessee are making a profit at the expense of the health of the labourer, for the simple reason that the Municipal Authority has not yet taken the necessary steps to provide accommodation for this class of labour.

9. It is a bitter commentary of the state of affairs that a large number of small boys were found to constitute a good proportion of the occupiers of these overcrowded rooms in these areas. The physical health of these lads must of necessity suffer; their mental and moral health is equally bound to suffer. The Municipal Authority is allowing the perpetuation of a system which will inevitably lead to a depraved population. Summing it up generally, our visits have shown us clearly that the physical, mental and the moral health of the labouring population of Rangoon is being endangered; that money is being made out of this by the unprincipled action of landlords, and that these last are enabled to do this because the Municipal Authority has hitherto failed to make adequate provision for the labour on which this Municipality is founded."

The steady boom in house and land values has driven up the cost of building construction so that the rents demanded are in excess of what the labouring class can reasonably be expected to pay. There has also been a steady rise in the standard of living involving greater expenditure than formerly on food, clothes and amusements with a corresponding lowering of the power of the people to pay the enhanced rents demanded. These factors are responsible for the overcrowding noticed above. Their want of knowledge of the elementary principles of hygiene and sanitation coupled with the absence of effective control accounts for the insanitary state of the dwellings. But the conditions referred to are not peculiar to the class of labourers who are obliged to find their own accommodation. The position is almost as bad in the cases of those operatives who are provided with rent-free accommodation by mills and factories. A point that particularly struck the writer in the course of investigations into housing conditions was the indifference of employers in the matter. In a large number of instances not only were the quarters in bad repair and overcrowded but the surroundings were in a highly insanitary state and the water supply neither good nor sufficient. A few typical examples will indicate the actual condition met with.

1. A Telugu employed as a paddy carrying cooly in a rice mill at Dawbon is accommodated in a room in a rickety state, zinc walls and roof and is generally in a dilapidated state. It is dark, filthy and badly ventilated. The water supply obtained from a pipe is neither good nor sufficient. The latrine is on the pit system; drainage and sanitation bad.

2. A Telugu employed as a boatman in a rice mill at Dawbon is given accommodation in a room 10' x 30' occupied by 20 other employees. The room is in a dilapidated condition the wooden flooring being rotten and the zinc walls and roof needing repairs. It is dismal,

dark, filthy and badly ventilated. Pipe water neither good nor sufficient. Latrine, pit system, drainage none, the surroundings being a veritable quagmire.

3. An Ooriya employed in a rice mill shares a room 10' x 25' with 23 other employees. The room has a wooden floor in a very bad state, *thali* or bamboo mat walls and a zinc roof and is in a dilapidated state. The pit system of latrine is in use. There is no drainage and sanitation is bad.

4. A Telugu employed in a rice mill at Dawbon. Is married, his wife and two young children live with him. The wife is also employed in the mill. They have free accommodation in a room 10' x 30' which they share with other employees consisting of two families and six single men. In all 9 men, 3 women and 6 children between the ages of 2 and 8 years occupy the room. The room is dark, filthy, badly ventilated and in a dilapidated condition. It has a wooden floor but zinc walls and roof. To secure privacy the three families have screened off with thick cloth portions of the room for their use, a measure which adds to the stuffiness of the room. Water obtained from a pipe is insufficient; latrine on pit system; drainage and sanitary arrangements deplorable.

5. A Telugu employed as a cooly in a rice mill at Dawbon. Is married; his wife and child live with him. The family share accommodation in a single room 10' x 30' with 21 other men. The room has a wooden floor in a rotten condition, zinc walls and roof, is badly ventilated and generally in a dilapidated state. Water obtained from a pipe is good but supply is not always sufficient. Pit system of latrine. Drainage and sanitation are bad.

6. A Tamil employed in a rice mill in Upper Pazundaung where his wife is also employed. They and their two children have to share 1 room 10' x 5' with another man and six women. The room is one of a number of similar rooms in a barrack; it has a wooden floor and zinc walls and roof. Pipe water; pit system; drainage and sanitation poor.

7. Also a Tamil employed in a rice mill in Upper Pazundaung. His wife and three children are living with him. The family occupy a room 6' x 15' in which 3 other families with three children are also accommodated. The room is crowded and badly ventilated.

8. A Telugu employed as a foundry cooly in the Government dockyards shares a room 28' x 56' with 29 other employees. The room has zinc walls and roof and a cement floor, ventilation fair.

9. An Ooriya employed in the Government dockyards at Dawbon shares a room 28' x 56' with other employees. Altogether 30 men live in the room which has a cement floor, zinc walls and a tiled roof. The room is in good condition and ventilation fair. Pipe water; latrine; pit system, sanitation fair but capable of considerable improvement.

The Corporation of Rangoon has prescribed that in a registered building the superficial area available for each person in occupation shall not be less than 36 square feet with the proviso that this area may be reduced to 24 square feet per head on the certification of the Health Officer that the ventilation is ample and that an open space exists around the building. A "registered building" is defined as one (a) which is occupied to any extent in common by members of more than three families; or (b) which is wholly or in part let in lodgings; or (c) which consists of one room occupied by members of more than one family. The power of determining whether a building or a room is to be registered as a "registered building" and the maximum number of persons that may at any time occupy such rooms or building is vested in the Health Officer of the Corporation. The bye-laws of the Corporation further prescribe that in estimating the maximum number of persons "the floor space occupied by bath rooms, kitchens, rooms or other spaces not intended for habitable purposes shall not be taken into account." On the basis of 36 square feet per head it will be observed that in every case of the examples given above the bye-laws are being infringed with impunity.

The defective building bye-laws are responsible for the present unsatisfactory type of buildings. It is surprising that in an extremely well laid out town dwelling houses and buildings are allowed to be so constructed as hardly even to allow proper light, air and sunshine to enter the living rooms, which, owing to the conditions of labour in the city, are perennially greatly overcrowded.

22. Reference has been made under (18) to the overcrowding existing not only in rooms occupied by labourers in the town but also in the mills. It was shown that married couples and unattached men and women live in no seclusion beyond that provided by a screen of cloth, gunny or mat. The moral effect on the dwellers is better imagined than described.

Except in the case of a few of the large mills which provide their operatives with free housing of a kind, the large employers are callous and negligent of their responsibilities in this matter. One European Manager of a large mill admitted that he had never inspected the cooly lines. It may be argued that land in Rangoon is too valuable or is not available. There is no good reason why barracks should not be put up on some suitable spot on the outskirts of the Town near the Railway Line. If this were done it should be an easy matter to arrange with the Railway Company to run "labour specials" in the mornings and evenings for the transport of the labourers. It would be a good thing if the Corporation were to erect suitable barracks and rent these out to those firms who are unable to put up quarters for their workmen; the

idea is worth considering. The Corporation Authority which has been chosen to discharge the public functions of the Community in which we live, should be urged steadily and persistently in this matter.

#### IV.—Health.

23. The majority of the labouring population of Rangoon consists of the poorly paid whose mode of living in overcrowded, ill-ventilated houses, barracks and cooly lines and in insanitary surroundings naturally tends to raise the general death rate. Personal hygiene and cleanliness are practically unknown to this class and their utter ignorance is a further handicap in lowering their standard of health and their ability to resist disease.

Indians are to be found all over the province and for statistical purposes are divided into two main groups—Hindus and Mohamedans. Births and deaths are registered according to the five main religious divisions of the population and not by communities of races, the main classes being Christians, Mohamedans, Hindus, Burmese or Buddhists and "other classes". This classification is the Government or official standard and is that adopted by Municipalities in Burma. As this note is concerned only with the immigrant population vital statistics are furnished in the tables below for the two main divisions comprising Indian immigrants. Statistics for Burmese are also given for purposes of comparison. The population of these three classes according to the 1921 Census in the whole of Burma and in Rangoon are:—

		Hindus.	Mohamedans.	Burmese.
Burma	.. .. .	450,236	483,349	9,480,566
Rangoon	.. .. .	125,626	62,070	105,523

It is only in the larger and more important Municipal towns in Burma that anything approaching accurate registration is carried out. In rural areas, and to a less degree in the smaller municipalities, registration of vital statistics is admittedly defective. According to the Director of Public Health, Burma (*vide* his annual report) the provincial mortality and the death-rate per 1,000 of population was:—

Year.	Hindus.		Mohamedans.		Burmese of Buddhists.	
	Number of deaths.	Rate per 1000 of population.	Number of deaths.	Rate per 1,000 of population.	Number of deaths.	Rate per 1,000 of population.
1921	10,055	23.34	9,003	18.46	203,750	21.54
1922	10,425	23.16	10,465	21.83	209,636	22.17
1923	9,620	21.37	9,432	19.31	100,063	21.00
1924	9,358	20.78	9,553	19.56	206,476	21.78
1925	9,212	20.46	9,235	18.91	177,089	18.68
1926	9,858	21.90	10,442	21.38	198,149	20.90
1927	9,767	21.69	9,781	20.03	184,661	19.48
1928	9,948	22.10	11,212	22.96	201,361	21.24

Examination of these figures indicates that the mortality rate among the Hindus though slightly higher than among the Mohamedans, approximates very closely to the death rate among the Burmese or Buddhists. It further indicates a steady increase in mortality rates in the past three years, a fact which is true in the case of either of the two classes.

As over sixty per cent. of the immigrant labour arriving in Burma from India remains for work in Rangoon it is interesting to examine the statistics of births and deaths as furnished by the Health Officer of the Corporation. The figures of births and birth-rates per 1000 of the female population at the child-bearing period between the ages of 15 and 50 and per 1000 of the population in the period 1922-1929 for each of the three main classes of the population are:—

TABLE A.

Number of births.	Hindus.		Number of births.	Mohamedans.		Number of births.	Buddhists.	
	Birth-rate per 1,000 of female population.	Birth rate per 1,000 of population.		Birth rate per 1,000 of female population.	Birth rate per 1,000 of population.			
1,859	129.49	14.80	937	132.57	15.10	2,266	73.79	21.47
1,816	126.49	14.46	930	131.58	14.98	2,143	69.78	20.31
1,996	139.03	15.89	927	131.15	14.93	3,283	74.34	21.64
1,894	131.93	15.08	909	128.61	14.64	2,349	76.49	22.26
2,131	148.44	16.96	961	135.96	15.48	2,754	89.68	26.10
2,204	153.52	17.54	939	132.85	15.13	2,636	83.83	24.98
2,304	160.49	18.34	1,022	144.60	16.47	2,706	88.11	25.64
2,623	182.71	20.88	1,139	161.15	18.35	2,986	97.23	28.30

The comparatively low birth-rate per 1,000 of population among the Indians is attributable to the migratory nature of the population and to the disproportion of the sexes among this class.

As regards infantile mortality the details of deaths and the death rates per 1,000 births are:—

Table B.

Year.	Hindus.		Mohamedans.		Burmese.	
	Number of deaths.	Rate.	Number of deaths.	Rate.	Number of deaths.	Rate.
1922 ..	735	395.37	279	297.76	688	303.62
1923 ..	704	287.67	309	322.26	724	337.84
1924 ..	798	399.80	370	399.14	757	331.58
1925 ..	765	403.90	305	335.53	801	340.99
1926 ..	747	350.54	302	314.25	894	324.62
1927 ..	772	350.27	293	254.53	704	267.07
1928 ..	806	349.83	351	343.44	1,008	372.51
1929 ..	883	336.64	376	330.11	970	324.85

Infantile mortality among the Burmese is very high, it is considerably more so among the Hindus being between 50 and 90 per 1,000 births higher. Except in 1924, in which the mortality rate among the Hindus and Mohamedans was approximately the same, the infant death rate among the Mohamedans has been lower than among the Burmese. Eighty per cent.

Eighty per cent. of the deaths among the Hindus is due to premature birth, malnutrition, convulsions, bronchitis or pneumonia, dysentery and diarrhoea, while the mortality among Mohamedan infants from the same causes is higher being 80 per cent. There is little doubt that the high infantile death rate among the Indian community is directly related to the social and economic conditions of this community caused by poverty, overcrowding and living in ill-ventilated houses amid insanitary surroundings.

In regard to general mortality statistics for Rangoon these are given in detail in the statements below. In Table C the figures relate to deaths per 1,000 of population for all ages including infantile deaths while in Table D infantile mortality has been excluded.

Table C—Including Infantile Mortality.

Year.	Hindus.		Mohamedans.		Burmese.	
	No. of deaths.	Rate.	No. of deaths.	Rate.	No. of deaths.	Rate.
1922 ..	4,927	39.42	1,855	29.94	3,930	38.18
1923 ..	4,536	36.29	1,883	30.39	3,915	37.93
1924 ..	4,417	35.34	1,724	27.82	3,627	35.14
1925 ..	4,622	36.79	1,875	30.21	3,976	37.63
1926 ..	4,566	36.35	1,841	29.66	3,927	37.21
1927 ..	4,246	33.80	1,626	26.20	3,317	31.43
1928 ..	4,168	33.18	1,739	28.02	4,050	38.38
1929 ..	4,004	31.87	1,606	25.87	3,699	35.05

Table D—Excluding Infantile Mortality.

Year.	Hindus.		Mohamedans.		Burmese.	
	No. of deaths.	Rate.	No. of deaths.	Rate.	No. of deaths.	Rate.
1922 ..	4,192	33.37	1,576	25.39	3,242	30.72
1923 ..	3,832	30.50	1,574	25.36	3,191	30.40
1924 ..	3,619	28.81	1,354	21.81	2,870	27.20
1925 ..	3,857	30.70	1,570	25.29	3,175	30.09
1926 ..	3,819	30.40	1,539	24.79	3,033	28.74
1927 ..	3,474	27.65	1,333	21.48	2,613	24.76
1928 ..	3,362	26.72	1,388	22.36	3,042	28.83
1929 ..	3,121	24.84	1,230	19.82	2,729	25.86

A scrutiny of the figures in Table C above does not reveal anything very startling. The mortality rate for all ages among the Hindus is 6 to 9 per thousand higher than among Mohamedans and is approximately the same as that among the Burmese notwithstanding the very high infantile mortality among the Hindus, mortality which as Table B indicated is over 60 per 1,000 higher than among the Burmese. In Table D this difference is less marked. The figures clearly dissipate the erroneous impression sometimes entertained that the mortality among the Indian labouring class is abnormally high. The greater majority of Indian immigrants are adults between the ages of 18 and 45 and neither provincial statistics of mortality nor the figures for Rangoon support that idea. The universal law observed in all large movements of population all over the world is that new comers to a country sooner or later become inured to the peculiar characteristics of their new environment with its attendant evils in the shape of illness, etc. Ordinarily new arrivals are no more prone to disease or death than the people of the country, though a reduced vitality of a class or section of a community coupled with insanitary conditions of life are factors which increase the liability to contract diseases which result in death.

(iii) Generally the conditions under which labourers work are fairly satisfactory. The occupation are not injurious to health and the places of work are open and airy. Even in cases of cottage industries such as cigarette making and cigar rolling, I have found conditions satisfactory. There is plenty of ventilation, light and air. It is in regard to their housing in mills and in the town, that fault is to be found.

(iv) The factors necessary to an ordered life, regular hours for meals, work, rest, exercise, etc., are absent in the case of most labourers who often have no recognised or regular time for food or rest. Frequently, a labourer is obliged to work for long hours at a stretch without food or rest and many have to content themselves with only two meals a day, the first in the early morning before proceeding to work, and the second at night after the days work is done. The physical strain is thus increased. Unfettered by control and supervision of any kind Indian labourers are under a great disadvantage. Added to these disabilities are the deplorable and insanitary living-in conditions. Considering all these factors it is marvellous that the Indian immigrant succeeds in maintaining his health and physique at a fairly high standard. His daily diet is not extraordinarily enriching. A typical diet of Tamils, Telugus and Uriyas comprises a daily average of—

20	ounces rice,
1.92	ounces dhal,
1.44	„ fish,
.8	„ flesh meat.
4.8	„ vegetables
.96	„ potatoes.

with the usual condiments, salt, cooking oil, etc. Uriyas do not eat meat as a rule. Hindustanis use atta in lieu of rice. It will be observed that rice and dhal constitute the main components of the diet of these three classes, but as the rice used is always higher milled, it is invariably deficient in all the vitamins. Dhal, however provides a larger quantity of Vitamin B while the vegetables which also form an important ingredient in the daily dietary provide all three vitamins. The general criterion of these dietaries is that the rice content in all is predominant and it is well known that rice while highly assimilable and therefore of great value as a heat and energy producer, requires to be supported by a sufficiency of other food materials to obtain a balanced diet.

In order to obtain an approximate estimation of the nutritive value of the diet most commonly consumed by the Indian labouring classes, Major G. G. Jolly, M.B., C.I.E., I.M.S., Director of Public Health, Burma, kindly examined a series of diets. A list of articles comprising typical diets was furnished by the writer and the examination was carried out at the Harcourt-Butler Institute of Public Health, Rangoon by Mr. J. Moitra, B.Sc., under the supervision of Major Jolly. This examination shows that the energy which the normal diet provides, ranges from an average of 2,567.4 Calories a day in the case of Tamils to 2,402 Calories in the case of Uriyas. The diet of the Telugu single man produces an average of 2,458.2 Calories per day while in the case of a family consisting of a man, his wife and a child under five years the average is about 2,181.3 Calories per head per day. In the case of a family consisting of a man, his wife and two children under 6 years where both husband and wife are actual workers the diet indicates a daily average of 2,800.4 Calories per head. To sum up the Indian labourer is less well nourished than the average Burmese labourer whose diet is more varied and balanced and that Atta eaters are better off than rice eaters. Generally it may be said that the immigrant Indian labourer sails very near the wind so far as the nutritive value of his diet is concerned, as the food commonly eaten provides only the bare minimum quantity of the alimentary principle necessary for the sustenance of life and the performance of ordinary work.

(24) Some mills and factories maintain a whole-time qualified medical officer whose functions include the rendering of medical aid to those injured at work and to the sick in the coolie lines, the daily inspection of the coolie lines, seeing to the water supply and cleaning of the latrines and generally supervising the sanitation of the lines. Defects are reported to the Manager of the mill. Some mills in addition, have a European Inspecting Medical Officer who is required to

visit the mill twice a week. The resident medical officers generally carry out duties satisfactorily. Not a single mill or factory in Rangoon maintains a qualified woman doctor or dai.

(25) Their services are freely requisitioned by the men workers. The women usually are reluctant to consult him and call in a native physician or dais or go to the nearest female dispensary. Expectant mothers do not utilize the services of the mill doctor, some call in a daily who is usually unqualified and some go to the Dufferin hospital. No mill doctor has ever kept a record of births or deaths in the cooly lines. He contents himself with merely reporting such occurrences to the Municipal registers of Births and Deaths. The experience of the writer is that the extreme indifference and callousness of most Managers of Mills in the matter of proper housing and general well-being of their workers in time communicates itself to the Medical Officers.

(26) This matter has been dealt with under III (16) and (18). Labourers living in houses in the *pucca* area—between China Street on the West and Judah Ezekiel Street on the East as well as those living further east in the newly extended area in town—are fairly well off in the matter of latrines, drinking water and waste places. All houses in this area are provided with taps, separate wash houses and latrines on the flush system. In buildings of two and three storeys the supply of water is not always regular. It is only in those areas where there is no flush system that the condition of latrines is bad. Here the bucket or pit system is employed. In mills generally the bucket system is employed and in most cases the conditions leave much to be desired. The number of seats is also inadequate. There are no separate bathing places for men and women and the water supply.

(27) The Health Department of the Corporation is responsible. Sanitation, etc., are satisfactory. The present condition of affairs in mills calls for drastic and immediate improvements.

(30) There is no sick Insurance.

(31) No mill or factory in Rangoon provides maternity benefits. This indifference to women workers cannot be condemned too strongly. Legislation is the only means which will make employers realise their responsibility in the matter. Expectant mothers should be taken off all work about 4 weeks before and for at least two weeks after confinement. During this period of enforced absence from work they should receive an adequate weekly allowance not less than 60 per cent. of their ordinary wages. They should receive free medical advice and treatment by qualified women doctors and nurses.

## V.—Welfare.

(32) to (36) Except one large European Factory, not a single mill or factory concerns itself with welfare schemes for their labourers. No Welfare officers or workers are employed nor is there provision for shelters, creches, education of children of workers, refreshments, physical culture, recreation or amusements.

(37) There is no question as to the desirability and possibility of providing for old age and premature retirement. Only one large Company provides a provident fund for its labourers. Membership is optional and the rate of monthly subscription is 5 per cent. of salary. The Company contributes a like amount and in addition adds to each labourer's account annually a bonus equivalent to a month's pay. The Fund is very popular and practically all the 5,000 odd workers are subscribers to the fund. This Company also grants disability pay during sickness.

Public opinion and interest in Labour questions in Burma is lamentably lacking. Labour is unorganised and there is no agency sufficiently interested and powerful enough to induce large employers of labour to introduce measures which would include the condition of the operatives. Direct action by Government is possible only in legislation. Legislation can apply only to certain aspects, such as restricting the hours of work, prohibiting the employment of women and children in certain operations and at nights, etc. The Indian Factories Act, 1911, exists for this purpose. The initiation of Welfare Schemes or measures must emanate from large employers of labour. But the indifference of employers, the ignorance of the general body of the labourers and the supineness of public opinion lead to the present unsatisfactory state of affairs.

Welfare schemes comprise measures connected with (a) food supply, (b) maternity benefits, (c) education, (d) Provident Benefits, and (e) Co-operative Credit. As regards (b) a suitable and inexpensive food supply is as important as good housing. The well-being and ability of labourers to undergo long hours of strain depend primarily on the nutritive value of their food. A well nourished body is better equipped for hard work and better able to resist disease. Under existing conditions labourers are severely handicapped in this respect. On first joining work the labourer has ordinarily little or no cash with which to purchase sustenance till he received his first week's or fortnight's wage he must induce the *local kaka* or Moplah tradesman to supply him with the necessaries on credit, or he must borrow the wherewithal from his maistry. Either of the courses lands him in debt. Starting by obtaining his food and other requirements of credit he is forced to continue this system practically throughout his engagement because of his inability to pay off the initial debt and at the same time purchase for cash. The credit system is more expensive and full value is rarely obtained under it. If he obtains provisions or money to purchase these from his maistry he is charged a high rate of interest for the loan. It is common for a labourer to be forced to pay back Rs. 25 for provisions obtained worth only

about Rs. 20. The establishment of a Co-operative Stores by the mill or factory is the only solution of this problem.

Closely connected with the subject of medical aid is that of maternity benefit schemes recommended by the Washington Conference. The scheme in brief is that the expectant mother should not be employed on night shifts, that she should be relieved of work about a fortnight or a month before her confinement, and not allowed to resume work for a further similar period after confinement, receiving wages during such enforced absence, and provision for the care of the infant while the mother is at work. Where women labour is employed it should be compulsory on the mill to maintain a woman doctor who should be required to supervise creches in addition.

#### V.—Welfare.

37. In regard to provident benefits, these may be of different kinds. One of these should be the granting of compensation for accidents or during illness or it may take the form of a Sick Benefit or Provident Fund. Prior to the passing of the Workmen's Compensation Act, 1923, employers of labour were immune from liability to compensate any of their operatives who might have been injured in the legitimate discharge of their duties. But certain classes of employers are now bound to provide for the payment to their workmen of compensation for injury by accident provided it was not due to culpable negligence on the part of the workman. The Act, however, does not provide for compensation during sickness. Stoppage of wages during illness even though free medical aid and attendance is provided, necessarily impoverishes the workman; his need for money is just the same. Some allowance during illness would undoubtedly be a valuable financial aid to him. The Empress Mills and Tatas recently inaugurated a voluntary Sick Benefit Fund open to all their employees. A monthly payment of Rs. 1-12-0 per head entitles a workman to an allowance of Rs. 25 for the first six weeks of his illness and Rs. 15 for a further period of eight weeks. A voluntary Provident Fund Scheme to enable men to save part of their earnings against old age on lines of Municipal and other Provident Funds would be of incalculable value. Workmen would soon realise that they possess a stake in their employment particularly if good and faithful work carried with it a bonus at the end of their services. Lastly the establishment of co-operative credit societies among the workers would lead to a reduction of debt and teach the operatives the value of the principles of co-operation.

#### VI.—Education.

The labouring classes, as a body, are illiterate and inefficient. Much can be done in improving their condition and capacity by bringing educational facilities within their reach. But the education of factory workers is not complete unless it provides not only for factory children but also for half-timers and adults. Propaganda work by social bodies such as the Servants of India Society or the Ramkrishna Mission, would help greatly in stimulating among the working classes a desire to improve their condition. The Labour Adviser to the Government of India, Miss Broughton, now Lady Chatterjee, writes:—"After thinking over the educational work done in the country, I have come to the conclusion that much of its utility is lost because it concentrates entirely on education of children instead of endeavouring to interest and educate the parents. The result is that the children after they leave school have no incentive to keep up what they have learned and very soon forget it all. If, therefore, the State or Municipal Authorities endeavoured to provide educational facilities for adults, much of the labour and money that is spent on the education of children would not be thrown away." The establishment of night schools which the adult male workers should be made to attend would be a step in the right direction. The Rangoon Social League is interesting itself in this matter.

#### XII.—Wages.

96. The rates of wages paid to the several classes of industrial labour in Rangoon are indicated below:

(a) **Baggage coolies of Steamship Companies.**—Where a permanent staff is maintained maistries receive Rs. 25 each, and coolies Rs. 19 each per mensem. Where labour is entertained as required coolies receive a daily rate of Rs. 12 each.

(b) **Shipping or dock labour** is of two classes, that employed by stevedores and that employed by the labour contract under agreement with the Port Commissioners and Shipping Companies. The rates paid are:—

By Stevedores for each day or night of actual work.	
By Europeans.	By Indians.
Foreman Rs. 6 and a food allowance of	
Rs. 1 a day.	
Head Maistry Rs. 2 each.	Rs. 2-12-0 each.
Kamalis Rs. 2-12-0 each.	Rs. 1-13-0 each.
Winchmen Rs. 2-13-0 each.	Rs. 2-2-0 each.
Coolies Rs. 1-9-0 each.	Rs. 1-5-0 each.
Coolies now receive a rate of Rs. 1-12-0 a day.	

## By Port Commissioners—

For handling import and export cargo. On a percentage basis calculated on the amount levied from shippers and consignees.

For removing receiving and delivering cargo. On a tonnage basis calculated on total tonnage handled.

For all other work for which a special staff is engaged a daily rate of

Gunner Rs. 4-0-0 each for twelve hours.

Maistry Rs. 3-2-0 each for twelve hours.

Cooly Rs. 1-9-0 each for twelve hours.

## (c) Rice Mills (European)—

For unloading paddy from boats .. 2 annas per hundred baskets.

For measuring above .. 3 annas per hundred baskets.

For clearing measured paddy and storing in godown .. .. Re. 1 to Rs. 1-3-0 per 100 baskets according as boat capacity does not or exceeds 2,500 baskets.

For removing paddy for milling .. 7½ annas per 100 baskets if hopper is above conveyor band and 3½ annas if hopper is in godown.

For transferring milled rice into bags, weighing and stitching .. .. Rs. 1-4-0 per 100 bags for single stitching.  
Rs. 1-6-0 per 100 bags for double stitching.  
Re. 1-12-0 per 100 bags for triple stitching.

For storing bags of rice in godowns .. Rs. 1-2-0 to Rs. 1-8-0 per 100 bags according to weight.

Rs. 3-4-0 to 3-8-0 for transporting bags to boat.

Rs. 3-8-0 to Rs. 3-10-0 for transporting bags from serving floor to boat.

For rebagging, etc. .. .. Rs. 3-12-0 per 100 bags and Rs. 1-8-0 for storing in godown.

## Indian Rice Millers pay :—

For unloading boat paddy and storing in godown .. .. 15 annas per 100 baskets.

For transferring paddy from godown to huller .. .. 8 annas per 100 baskets.

In drying paddy .. .. 1 anna per 100 baskets.

In boiling paddy, etc. .. .. Rs. 4-8-0 per 100 baskets.

In bagging, sewing and loading boats .. Rs. 7-8-0 per 100 baskets.

In conveying rice in baskets and loading sampans .. .. Rs. 1-2-0 per 100 baskets.

## (d) Port Commissioners for skilled and unskilled labour :—

Serangs, deck .. .. Rs. 45—2—65 per mensem.

Serangs, Engine .. .. Rs. 45—2—65 per mensem.

Stokers .. .. Rs. 22 and Rs. 30 ..

Lascars .. .. Rs. 20 and Rs. 28 ..

Durwans .. .. Rs. 20—1—26. ..

Peons .. .. Rs. 18—1/3—19—1—25.

Serangs, Secunnies, stokers, lascars and tindals receive in addition a Fire, Sea or District allowance of Rs. 5, Rs. 5 and Rs. 2 respectively a month.

## 97. (i) Generally the increase in wages on the pre-war rate has been approximately :—

Unskilled labour .. .. 33½ per cent.

Menials in boat service .. .. 25 per cent.

Domestic servants .. .. 40 per cent.

Unskilled general labour .. .. 10 to 15 per cent.

Skilled workers .. .. 33½ to 50 per cent.

(ii) The increases in wages are due to the high cost of living and high house rents.

(iii) During the eight years 1900—1907 the price-levels of rice, both best and common sorts, wheat and arhar dhall were maintained at below the parity of the level adopted as the standard. In 1902-04 the price of rice of the quality consumed by the working class population was 25 per cent. cheaper than the normal while wheat and arhar dhall were also cheaper in the period 1904—07. Thereafter, prices of all commodities continued to advance steadily till the year immediately preceding the War, the rise in the price of rice in particular being most marked, being about 68 per cent. above the pre-war normal. Since the termination of the War the tendency of price has been to soar. Though values are now below the level of the War period they are considerably higher than in the years immediately preceding it. In the post-war period 1919—1925 the price-level of rice has varied between 133 and 182 in the case of the best sort and between 159 and 218 in the case of the common quality. The price-levels of wheat and dhall also advanced fluctuating between 236 and 330 in the case of wheat and between 294 and 392 in the case of dhall. Salt prices ruled above the normal during 1902-04 when there was a drop to below the standard but since 1904 the price has steadily risen approximating an average of 92 points above the normal. The statement below shows the trend of prices, the figures representing average price levels compared with the pre-war normal of 100.

Article.	1900-07.	1908-13.	1919-25.
Rice, best .. .. .	77·5	123·4	165·0
Rice, common .. .. .	83·25	139·0	193·0
Wheat .. .. .	78·5	112·4	263·6
Arhar dhall .. .. .	79·5	110·0	338·6
Salt .. .. .	97·0	116·0	192·3
General average .. .. .	83·0	120·0	228·0

Recently however, owing to keen competition among stock-holders, bad trade conditions and tightness of the money market, prices have fallen appreciably but they are still much above the parity of the period 1908—1913.

100. The extent and effect of payment of wages through contractors and maistries are shown for each class of labour for which wage information was given under question (96).

(a) *Baggage Coolies.*—Though steamship companies now disburse wages direct to the coolies, the men are forced by the contractor to pay him Rs. 9 monthly. The maistries in turn levy Rs. 1-4-0 a week from each cooly. A cooly therefore actually receives only Rs. 5 a month as wages instead of Rs. 19 the amount paid by the Company. To make up the shortage in salary the coolies prey on passengers, particularly deck passengers, extorting money for services which are supposed to be rendered free. The contractors and maistries are aware of these extortions but close their eyes to the acts of the coolies for the very good reason that the maistries share in the extortions. In the case of temporary gangs for casual work the contractor appropriates the whole amount of wages paid by the Company.

(b) *Shipping Labour.*—Gangs are invariably under-employed, usually too below strength. The Gang maistry appropriates the wages of the two men short employed. The head maistry levies a commission of one anna per head per day from each class of labour and his clerk similarly takes one anna a day from each Winchman.

(c) *Rice Mills. (European).*

(i) *Unloading and measuring paddy boats.*—The sub-maistries in charge of these operations deduct a commission of Rs. 1-4-0 from each weekly bill and pay the balance to the coolies. In addition each sub-maistry takes from each cooly Rs. 25 a year as a perquisite or gratuity.

(ii) *Clearing measured paddy and storing it in godown.*—The head maistry allows his sub-maistries an all-round rate of 14 annas per 100 baskets for outturns of 50 whole baskets or multiples thereof. For example, if 2,769 baskets were cleared and stored the sub-maistries are paid for 2,760 baskets only at 14 annas per 100 baskets although the mill has paid for 2,769 baskets at Rs. 1 to Rs. 1-3-0 per 100 baskets. The head maistry also deducts Re. 1 from each sub-maistry's bill. It must be noted that the mill pays the head maistry a commission of 20 per cent. calculated on the amount of each weekly bill. This is his legal remuneration. Each sub-maistry deducts 2 annas from the rate paid to him by the head maistry, eliminates all outturns which are not in whole fifties and deducts two shares of the wages due for himself and his clerk. The balance is distributed equally among the coolies. For instance if 18 men are employed and the outturn is 1,483 baskets the sub-maistry calculates wages on only 1,450 baskets at 12 annas per 100 baskets and divides the amount into 20 equal shares retaining the value of two shares for himself and disbursing the balance equally among the 18 coolies.

(iii) *Removing paddy for milling.*—In addition to the rates stated under 96 (c) the mills give their head maistries a commission of 20 per cent. on the value of each bill presented.

The head maistry allows his sub-maistries rates which are one anna below the schedule rates calculated on outturns of whole fifties disregarding outturns which are not multiples of that number. He also deducts a commission of Re. 1 from each sub-maistry's bill. The sub-maistries deduct half an anna from rates allowed them and pay the coolies at rates of 6 annas and 2 annas respectively, on outputs which are multiples of 50. In addition each sub-maistry takes the value of two parts of the wages, one for himself and one for his clerk. This is done in the same manner as described above.

(iv) Transferring milled rice into bags, weighing and stitching.—Every mill allows its head maistry the usual 20 per cent. commission. Every head maistry employs two sub-maistries for these operations. The bagging and weighing gang are under a sub-maistry called the weighing maistry. The stitchers are under the sewing maistry.

The head maistry pays these men as follows :—

	Weighing maistry.		Sewing maistry.	
	A.	P.	A.	P.
For single stitching per 100 bags .. ..	10	0	9	6
For double stitching per 100 bags .. ..	10	0	9	6
For triple stitching per 100 bags .. ..	14	0	11	6

As in the other operations payment is made on outturns of even 50 bags. The Head Maistry also appropriates from all bills of both sub-maistries (i) a commission of 5 per cent. on value of each bill presented to him (ii) all annas and pies in the total and (iii) a commission of Re. 1 towards the pay of his clerk. *The modus operandi* of the two sub-maistries in disbursement of wages to the labourers is as follows :—The weighing maistry deducts (i) a commission of 5 per cent. calculated on actual amount received by him (ii) all annas and pies (iii) value of two men's wages. The sewing maistry deducts  $1\frac{1}{2}$  annas from the rates allowed him by the head maistry as well as the value of 6 men's wages.

(v) Carrying stitched bags to godown and thence to boat and from sewing floor to boat direct. The head maistry who is directly in charge of this gang gets the usual 20 per cent. commission on each bill. While the mills pay on the actual outturn, the head maistry ignores quantities which are not in even tons and pays on balance at Re. 1 per 100 small bags and Re. 1-4 for 100 large bags for removal and storage and Rs. 2 per 100 bags for conveyance from godown to boat and Rs. 2-8 for conveyance from sewing floor to boat direct. In addition, he appropriates the value of wages of two men for himself and his clerk. To appease the coolies he gives each a bonus of Rs. 4 or Rs. 5 once, or twice a year.

(vi) Rebagging, etc.—The head maistry gets the usual 20 per cent. commission. The weighing and sewing gangs who are employed on these operations and paid direct by the head maistry and not through the sub-maistries receive payment at Rs. 2 and Re. 1 per 100 bags but in distributing the wages the value of two men's wages are deducted. In addition to the deductions referred to above the head maistry appropriates wholly the value of two weekly bills annually, one bill relating to a week in the busy season when mills work day and night, and the other for a week when mills work only during the day. In such cases the coolies are paid Rs. 2 each per week.

102. There does not appear to be any standard basis of payment for overtime or Sunday work. The Port Commissioners who are probably the largest payers of overtime have different scales on which overtime is calculated. For one class of work, men on Rs. 50 get an overtime of Rs. 1-15, those on Rs. 60 receive Rs. 2-11-0. In another class the payment is on the basis of a day's pay. The Port Health Superior Staff receive overtime equivalent to a day's pay. Except the Customs service, the Telegraph Department and the Government Press, no overtime is paid in any Government department.

As regards commercial and industrial concerns there is no hard and fast rule for payment of overtime and when overtime is paid the basis is either half a day's wage, a day's wage or one and a half days' wage. In one large European concern labourers employed on a Sunday receive  $1\frac{1}{2}$  days' wage but under the Factory Act such men are given a day off during the week for which day they receive no wage. As all the labour is employed on a daily wage rate, the men employed on overtime do not therefore benefit to any considerable extent. If overtime is intended to enable an industrious worker to earn more money than the existing provision in the Factories Act operates against this purpose. Further, this provision is apparently inoperative in the case of rice mill labour which receives no overtime, and which has no stated hours for work.

105. Widely divergent views are entertained in Rangoon as to what constitutes a minimum wage but the consensus of opinion among a large section of employers appears to be that a minimum wage is one that will provide an employee with the bare necessities of 'existence'. Without desiring to enter into a dissertation on the subject, it would be sufficient to suggest that a

minimum wage should be one that would enable an employee to 'live' in moderate comfort and leave a surplus sufficient to provide necessary incidentals in the shape of washing, replenishing of the wardrobe for work-a-day purposes, bus or gharry fare during unseasonable weather occasional amusements, and provision of medical needs in time of illness and for an annual holiday. It should also suffice to provide for small savings monthly against 'old age or retirement, particularly in spheres of work which do not give provident or pensionary benefits. This standard may at first sight appear to be an idealistic one but a little reflection will show that the mental, moral and bodily well-being of an employee are decidedly to the advantage of the employer. Physical well-being cannot be expected of an employee who 'exists' not 'lives' and a poorly nourished body sooner or later re-acts on the mental and moral character. In no sphere of work perhaps is the mistaken view referred to above more marked than in the case of employees in the retail trade. The case of shop girl assistants illustrates most markedly under-payment in the trade. Long hours of work are demanded and the girls are expected always to be cleanly and neatly clothed and shod. The starting pay in one firm is Rs. 35 a month plus a commission of one per cent. on sales. Many of these girls are the sole wage earners in the family consisting of a widowed mother in indifferent health and/or a younger brother or sister of a school going age. To house and feed herself and her dependents and clothe herself on Rs. 35 a month is asking the impossible. It is true there is the commission but this rarely amounts to Rs. 10 a month on the average. Girls who have no dependents live at the Y. W. C. A. hostel for the sake of cheapness. It is to the credit of that excellent institution that it considerably charges a rate of boarding and lodging based on the actual pay drawn. As this institution depends on public generosity for its main revenue it cannot continue indefinitely to under charge without eventually being forced to lower the quality and standard of the food supplied. Apart from the payment to the hostel the girls have to meet expenses on washing, club subscriptions, provide themselves with clothing etc., Rs. 35 does not suffice. This matter of organised under-payment is the direct cause why so many respectable girls go wrong. Poor wages result in moral turpitude by weakening the impulse to resist temptation. Consequently it is not surprising that so many young girls find it increasingly difficult to refuse the 'easy' money so generously and constantly thrown into their laps and the temptation to accept becomes greater should illness prevail in the family at the time. A semi-starved body is the greatest asset in the armour of the tempter. The logical consideration that should govern the fixation of a minimum wage for this class of workers should be the cost of living and living-in conditions. A reasonable minimum or starting salary for shop girls and male assistants would be Rs. 60. The progressiveness of a nation is seriously retarded if the female quantity of its population is not adequately cared and provided for. It is highly desirable therefore that some workable measure should be introduced to ensure the payment of a fair minimum wage in all classes of employment.

107. Apart from a series of enquiries carried out between 1921 and 1924 in connection with working class budgets, in the early part of 1925, I carried out a further investigation to ascertain the extent of indebtedness among Indian immigrant labourers. Several hundred men picked at random were examined. A large percentage admitted being in debt to the extent of sums variously stated to range from Rs. 15 to Rs. 1,000 borrowed on interest at rates ranging from one per cent. to twenty five per cent. per mensem. In a few cases loans were taken from relatives or friends free of interest. Considerable difficulty was experienced in collecting information. Many showed a reluctance to disclose the true state of their indebtedness, some appeared to understate the facts, while some appeared to have a most hazy notion of their indebtedness. For these reasons a large number of enquiries were rejected. Only 163 enquiries; the admitted statements in which were capable of some check and verification, were retained. Sixty-one or 37 per cent. admitted debt.

The classes examined with results are set out below :—

Class.	No. examined.	No. in debt.
Uriyas .. .. .	31	9
Hindustanis .. .. .	14	4
Tamils .. .. .	41	15
Telugus .. .. .	77	33

The purposes for which it was stated money was borrowed are :—

Remittance to wife 17 ; marriage celebrations 11 ; remittance to parents 7 ; funeral rites 6 ; illness 4 ; being out of work 3 ; clearing old debts and paying trade bills 2 each ; setting up in business, purchasing land in village and building a house in Burma one each ; no definite reasons assigned 6. Enquiries showed that various causes contributed towards the indebtedness. 17 per cent. of admitted indebtedness appear to be due to the high rents paid for a small room about 20 feet square for which as much as Rs. 15, Rs. 20 and Rs. 25 were paid, representing 20 per cent. or more of the average earnings. Clothing and 'extras' account for 8 per cent. of cases ; drink on which 15 per cent. of income was spent is responsible for 13 per cent. of the indebtedness. In the majority of cases, however, the indebtedness was attributed to insufficiency of money

due to the low scale of wages earned or to under-payment. An analysis of the admitted income of the borrowers does not support the contention of poor wages as in only 16 per cent. was the monthly wage Rs. 20 or less. On the other hand, no less than 40 per cent. of the borrowers were in receipt of an income of Rs. 40 or over a month. As 31 per cent. of the borrowers represent labourers under contract it is probably true that under-payment is the cause of indebtedness.

#### XV.—Industrial disputes.

123. There have been two big strikes among dock and shipping coolies in the last decade. The first occurred early in 1924 and the second in May this year. The causes of both strikes were ostensibly for an increase in wages. The earlier strike which lasted for about a fortnight was really due to the grievances which the employees of one firm had against their head maistry. The labourers of the other firms joined issue in sympathy and as their grievances were more or less identical they felt themselves justified in joining those who first went on strike. The more important of their demands were (1) an increase in wages and (2) an interval in the day for meals. Both demands were granted by employers. Between 6,000 and 8,000 labourers were affected. This strike caused great dislocation to shipping. This year's strike was on a greater magnitude and it led to serious rioting with bloodshed between Indian labourers and the Burmese. The Local Government appointed a Committee of Enquiry and a reference is invited to the Committee's report which has been published.

#### XVIII.—Intelligence.

143. A reference has been made to these matters earlier in this statement and it appears unnecessary to repeat them here.

145. The Labour Statistics Bureau has carried out an investigation into the Standard and Cost of Living of the Working Classes in Rangoon, and a report was published last year giving the results of the Enquiry. As regards investigations by private individuals a reference is invited (a) to an interesting brochure on "Contract Labour" by Mr. A. Narayana Rao, and (b) My Book on "Indian Labour in Rangoon".

### APPENDIX I.

Table A.

Statement of Indian and Foreign Immigration and Emigration by sea recorded at the Port of Rangoon during the twenty two years 1908-1929.

Calendar Year.	Immigrants.				Emigrants. Total.	Difference between Column 5 and Column 6.
	Men.	Women.	Children.	Total.		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1908	223,582	17,410	11,083	252,075	227,568	24,507
1909	224,817	16,666	14,999	256,482	253,349	3,133
1910	235,324	16,347	16,436	268,107	217,111	50,996
1911	256,439	18,229	14,777	289,445	221,981	67,464
1912	223,164	18,608	15,213	256,985	240,917	16,068
1913	272,593	23,664	16,782	313,039	271,687	41,352
1914	186,608	18,408	11,825	216,841	73,242	143,599
1915	261,979	16,919	13,070	291,968	198,715	93,253
1916	201,889	15,837	12,142	229,868	200,898	28,970
1917	182,297	13,727	10,765	206,789	216,910	10,121
1918	214,243	13,152	10,743	238,138	206,280	31,858
1919	240,709	16,922	13,822	271,453	200,646	70,807
1920	276,386	23,028	17,423	316,837	217,212	99,625
1921	266,021	23,912	15,899	306,432	266,892	39,540
1922	282,069	23,769	14,778	320,606	266,398	54,208
1923	301,499	25,627	15,035	342,161	243,886	98,275
1924	306,655	25,652	15,094	347,401	265,354	82,047
1925	290,396	24,607	15,209	330,212	301,896	28,316
1926	324,024	28,301	17,109	370,034	292,394	77,640
1927	339,454	31,531	16,007	386,992	311,895	75,097
1928	339,180	30,730	15,713	385,623	291,162	94,461
1929	326,045	29,124	14,189	369,358	324,011	45,347

## APPENDIX I—contd.

Table B.

Statement showing Indian Immigration and Emigration by sea as recorded at the Port of Rangoon during the sixteen years 1913-1929.

Calendar Year.	Immigrants.				Emigrants.	Difference between Columns 5 and 6.
	Men.	Women.	Children.	Total.	Total.	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1913	252,926	20,690	14,966	288,582	242,679	45,903
1914	171,275	16,216	10,504	197,995	53,299	144,696
1915	250,479	15,464	12,059	278,002	184,665	93,337
1916	191,336	14,119	10,685	216,140	167,174	48,966
1917	173,843	12,592	9,763	196,198	187,680	8,518
1918	208,436	12,340	10,001	230,777	180,940	49,837
1919	231,206	15,493	12,599	259,298	176,715	82,583
1920	264,392	20,262	15,634	300,288	188,999	111,289
1921	263,025	20,912	13,951	287,888	245,391	42,497
1922	267,329	20,626	12,988	300,943	246,977	53,966
1923	287,618	21,474	13,042	322,134	223,918	98,216
1924	291,401	21,763	12,865	326,029	242,568	83,461
1925	275,832	20,980	12,917	309,335	277,322	32,013
1927	319,906	27,167	13,953	361,086	280,739	80,347
1928	320,247	28,273	13,609	369,129	263,345	99,784
1929	308,075	25,423	12,408	345,906	294,574	51,332

## APPENDIX I—contd.

Table C.

Statement of Immigrants arriving in Rangoon by sea from the chief ports in India. (Deck only).

		1921.	1922.	1923.	1924.	1925.	1927.	1928.	1929.
Calcutta	Men	92,254	84,860	92,818	88,741	96,059	99,011	110,285	96,417
	Women	7,494	5,248	5,617	5,772	6,059	5,943	6,732	6,568
	Children	4,704	2,975	2,797	3,245	3,654	3,305	3,674	3,428
	Total	104,452	93,113	101,232	97,758	105,772	108,259	120,691	106,413
Chittagong and Aracan.	Men	29,776	34,274	34,401	40,511	38,371	43,689	47,014	48,924
	Women	837	726	693	981	1,025	858	1,425	1,850
	Children	667	722	514	800	775	460	637	874
	Total	31,260	35,722	35,608	42,301	40,171	45,007	49,076	51,648
Madras	Men	38,380	44,687	42,965	47,171	49,193	56,495	52,203	42,460
	Women	5,862	5,388	5,202	5,401	5,848	7,002	6,271	4,261
	Children	3,987	3,221	2,998	3,209	3,917	3,651	3,341	2,238
	Total	48,229	53,296	51,165	55,781	58,958	67,148	61,815	48,949
Coromandel Ports.	Men	71,738	73,079	99,227	98,509	80,448	92,636	82,804	93,592
	Women	3,887	3,777	4,750	4,868	3,602	5,275	4,421	4,780
	Children	3,179	2,831	3,296	3,278	2,236	2,748	2,314	2,478
	Total	78,804	79,687	107,273	106,655	86,286	100,659	89,539	100,850
Total all Ports.	Men	232,128	226,930	269,411	274,932	264,071	291,831	292,306	281,383
	Women	18,680	15,139	16,262	17,022	16,534	19,078	18,849	17,459
	Children	12,537	9,749	9,605	10,541	10,582	10,164	9,966	9,018
	Total	263,245	261,818	295,278	302,495	291,187	321,073	321,121	307,860

NOTE.—Figures for 1926 are not available.

## APPENDIX I—contd.

Table D.

Statement of Emigrants leaving Rangoon by sea for Indian Ports. (Deck only)

—	1921.	1922.	1923.	1924.	1925.	1927.	1928.	1929.
Calcutta .. ..	100,756	79,277	72,671	84,185	77,098	81,684	85,459	88,318
Chittagong .. ..	(a)6,674	17,478	13,993	15,647	26,055	(c)12,435	(c)12,624	(c)29,584
Aracan .. ..	(b)21,923	13,475	17,387	19,209	20,992	28,295	17,101	25,971
Madras .. ..	33,984	35,964	30,189	39,351	41,485	57,322	47,714	49,197
Coromandel Ports ..	66,029	83,160	72,586	56,707	92,982	91,351	89,853	(d)86,144
Other Ports .. ..	791	989	754	948	..	..	..	..
Total all Ports ..	230,157	230,343	213,580	216,107	258,612	271,087	252,751	278,214

## NOTE—

1. Arakan is a division of Burma. Chittagong is a port in India.
2. Figures for 1926 are not available.
- (a) denotes to Chittagong only by A. S. N. Coy's Steamers.
- (b) denotes to Arakan Ports and to Chittagong by B. I. S. N. Coy's Steamers. Separate figures are not available.
- (c) Includes emigrants by Bengal-Burma S. N. Coy's steamers.
- (d) Includes outgoings by B. B. S. N. Coy's steamers.

## THE PRIVATE MEDICAL PRACTITIONER'S ASSOCIATION, RANGOON.

## Housing.

The question of housing the labour of Rangoon has so far failed to be adequately tackled. Although the bodies like the Municipal Corporation, Port Trust, Burma Railways and a few of the industrial concerns provide housing accommodation for a portion of their labour, yet a visit to any of the streets occupied by the labourers will show how labourers are packed together in small rooms regardless of any laws of hygiene and sanitation. This association is not in a position to reply to the questionnaire under the heading of housing in detail as to the extent to which housing is provided by employers, by Government, private landlords or workers themselves. But it is evident to all interested in questions concerning the Public Health of the town and the welfare of the labourers that the labour of this town is not adequately provided with lodging houses by their employers with the result that they have to find accommodation in lodging houses in the town. The condition of these lodging houses is simply appalling from the hygienic point of view. According to the Municipal Laws 36 sq. feet of floor space is calculated per person in a residential house. The way in which the lodging houses in the towns are occupied by the labourers under their Maistry (Headman) shows that this law is not only entirely ignored by the Maistry but is mercilessly abused. Every inch of the space in the room is occupied and at night when all are asleep it is impossible for one to walk across the room unless he treads over the sleeping persons. In this connection para. 74 on page 32 of the 1st volume of the Report on the Public Health of Rangoon gives the woeful tale of the condition of these lodging houses. It states that in a room which according to the Municipal Law could not accommodate more than nine persons, were seen fifty persons sleeping. This would give the Commission some idea of the appalling congestion in the lodging houses. Besides the accommodation, the rooms are ill-ventilated. There is only the front door and a window or an aperture at the back which in the rainy season and winter are kept closed at night. This cuts off the only source of fresh air. The occupants breathe the air in the room over and over again with the attendant consequences. Then again there is perhaps only one water closet to be used by all with no chance of the place being disinfected for months together.

Coming to the type of houses provided by the employers it cannot be said that they are such as would reasonably meet the ordinary requirements of the sanitary laws. The coolie barracks provided by some of the firms are not bad but unfortunately such instances are very few indeed. The ordinary requirements of a coolie barrack are general cleanliness, provision for plenty of fresh air and sun light, satisfactory sanitary arrangements, clean and healthy surroundings and adequate water supply. If these are lacking and they are so in a majority of cases, there is always danger of disease and epidemics among the labouring classes which affects not only the labourers but is a menace to the general public.

*Suggestions.*—All employers including bodies like the Corporation, Rangoon Development Trust, Port Trust, Burma Railways and other commercial and industrial firms should provide accommodation to the fullest extent for their labour.

2. The type of accommodation should be according to the up to date sanitary and public health requirements. That is, there should be ample provision for—the perfolation of fresh air, entrance of sun light, adequate space per person and special provision for married persons. The sanitary requirements must be fulfilled, proper drains and arrangement for flushing them should be provided, surroundings should be well kept.

3. For the casual labour who must occupy lodging houses in the town, the Corporation should enforce strict observance of the Municipal Laws. It should, if necessary, employ more hands to adequately enforce the rules. Severe punishments should be inflicted for the violation of the rules. The landlords should be made to periodically whitewash, paint and attend to necessary repairs needed in the houses.

### Health.

There are no means by which the health conditions of labourers can be satisfactorily examined. There are no special figures of birthrate, deathrate, infant mortality or for diseases among labourers available. The study of this question must therefore be based on the deductions from the general health conditions of the town. Rangoon is predominantly a commercial town and there is always an influx of Indian labour for which this town forms the distributing centre. A very large portion of the population is formed of the floating population which is mainly housed in the tenement houses in the town. The death, birth and Infantile Mortality rates of the town must therefore draw a major share from the labouring classes. The death rate of this town is alarmingly high when compared to that of other important commercial towns. For purpose of comparison we would take the statistics for 1922, the year for which the figures of different places are available to this association. The death rate in London was 13·5, Birmingham 11·9, and Liverpool 14·6, while in Rangoon it was 36·04. Then again in 1924, the death rate in different places was as follows:—Rangoon 33·15, England 12·2, Colombo 29·3, Bombay 33·44, Madras 41·90 and Singapore 27·08. These figures would prove that death rate in Rangoon forms a very serious problem. All Authorities are agreed that labouring classes, living in conditions as they are in, contribute largely to this factor.

Coming to "Infantile Mortality" and to quote from the report on the Public Health of Rangoon, "Infantile Mortality is appallingly heavy here." The Infantile Mortality for the years 1928 and 1929 is 340·69 and 320·54 respectively. The Infantile Mortality rate, if not the highest, is one of the highest in the world. The causes for this serious situation are to be found in the Health Department's Reports and the means of remedying them will be discussed at a later stage. While the Infantile Mortality and the general death rates are going high, the birth rate is decreasing. The vital statistics afford an insight into this question.

23. (ii) The method of registration of both births and deaths is carried out by the Municipal Corporation through its Births and Deaths Registration Offices scattered over the different quarters of the town. Registration of deaths is easily carried out. No burial can take place without the production of a burial pass from the Corporation.

As for the registration of births, every birth of a child within the Municipal area, is to be notified for registration. Failure to do that within six months of the birth, exposes the party concerned to prosecution and fine. With the number of vaccinators and Lady Health Visitors it should not be a difficult task to exercise an adequate check.

(iii) The question of housing and its relation to health has already been discussed in the earlier part of this note. It cannot however be over-emphasised that there is an intimate relationship between the housing problem and health of the occupiers. Proper sanitation of houses forms an important factor in the health problems of a town. Plenty of fresh air, bright sunlight, proper sanitary arrangements and a good and adequate water supply are some of the most essential requirements for town life. Absence of these means adverse effect on the health of an individual. Want of fresh air, open space and sunlight for instance, predisposes a person to Tuberculosis. Similarly insanitary conditions and inadequate supply of good water may form a predisposing factor for the origin of diseases such as Dysentery, Diarrhoea, Cholera, Typhoid, etc. Once the infection finds room in such places, it is not difficult for it, considering the favourable conditions prevailing, for an epidemic to develop.

24. (i) Medical facilities provided by employers must be regarded as highly insufficient. There are very few firms, hardly three or four who provide medical facilities for their labour. These facilities take the shape of a small outdoor dispensary under the charge of a medical man. In a majority of cases, this medical man is not a qualified doctor. It may be put forward by the firms that they have duly qualified medical men as their medical officers. In this connection it may be pointed out that the so-called doctors actually in charge of their dispensaries and health of the labourers, both accidental and casual, are men with no medical education or qualification. At best they are compounders. The medical officers pay visits periodically for the benefit of the superior staff, and to meet the requirements of the Factory Act. It is suggested that all emplo-

yers who employ labour to a minimum strength which should be fixed by the commission, should be required to engage the services of a full time duly qualified medical man.

(ii) The only provision for medical facilities by the Government in this town is the General Hospital with an accommodation of about 5 to 6 hundred beds and two dispensaries. For a town with a population of over 3½ lakhs the hospital accommodation is ridiculously low. This hospital has to meet the demands of important cases from all over the province. It cannot therefore be said that the labour is provided with adequate medical facilities by the Government when the Government, it must be admitted, has not made enough provision for the town as a whole. For the sufficiency or insufficiency of accommodation for the general public and thereby the provision of medical facilities for the labour in the General Hospital, a reference is invited to the Annual Reports of the General Hospital.

(iii) Besides the General Hospital and the two Government out-door dispensaries there is the Ramakrishna Mission Hospital and four dispensaries provided by the Corporation of Rangoon. The Ramakrishna Mission Hospital is run by the public contributions and assistance by the Corporation and Government. Although a boon for the labouring classes, it cannot possibly reach, with its limited accommodation and resources, even anywhere near the minimum requirements of the town.

In short medical facilities, provided both by the Government and all other agencies combined are anything but adequate.

(iv) The only provision for woman doctors in the town is made up of those in the Dufferin Hospital, in the Maternity and Infant Welfare Centres, a couple of them in the General Hospital and two Lady Health Assistants employed by the Corporation of Rangoon. All these combined will not exceed a dozen and a half in number. That being so, what share falls to the lot of the labouring classes can better be imagined than described. There is no provision at all by the Government barring the service Dufferin Hospital, an institution for women, is rendering. The Rangoon Corporation employs about a dozen midwives who are expected to vaccinate females and children, give advice to woman-folk on general lines, attend Municipal Centres for Infant welfare and also attend to confinements. Besides these, there are a few midwives employed by the Maternity and Infant Welfare Centres whose activities are mostly confined to their Centres. It will therefore be seen that the provision of trained midwives to the labourers practically dwindles down to nil. There are, no doubt, trained midwives available to the general public on payment. They, however, are not within the reach of labouring classes. Dais or unqualified midwives are gradually dying out after the enactment of the law prohibiting unqualified midwives from practising.

25. For actual statistics on this item reference is invited to the Annual Reports of the Inspector-General of Civil Hospitals, Burma, on Hospitals and Dispensaries and also of the Health Officer of the Corporation of Rangoon, on the working of the Municipal Dispensaries. This association, through the experience of its members, is convinced that the labouring classes, particularly of this town, are amenable to the western system of medicine. The existing medical institutions are freely utilized by them. If there is any paucity in the utilization of the medical institutions by the labouring classes, it is due to the fact that there is not enough provision for medical relief. For a labourer to receive attention at a dispensary or hospital, it would probably mean waiting for hours and to get admission into the hospital he may perhaps have to wait for at least weeks if not months.

29. For statistical information on this item reference is invited to the Annual Reports of the Health Department of the Municipal Corporation of Rangoon. This association intends dealing only with those diseases which are common among labourers in this town. The most important of these are of Respiratory and Digestive Groups.

The total number of deaths from Respiratory Diseases in the year 1906 was 1,100; in 1925 it increased to 2,344—*vide* Report on the Public Health of Rangoon, Volume I, Para. 16. In 1929 it has come up to 3,133,—*vide* Health Department's Report 1929. This shows the alarming rapidity with which the Respiratory Diseases are increasing in Rangoon. These figures being the death rates, the number of inhabitants suffering from these diseases can be well imagined. The main contribution to this figure is made by Tuberculosis. Although the total number of deaths from Tuberculosis, as recorded, is only 804 for the year 1929, but it is an indisputable fact that a very large number of deaths from Respiratory Diseases are undetected cases of Tuberculosis. Many of these cases die without receiving any treatment from qualified medical men and their diseases pass undetected. It is a recognized fact that Tuberculosis is increasing at a high rate and is becoming a national menace. It is engaging the serious attention of the Government, the Corporation of Rangoon and all others concerned in the Public Health problems. The disease is prominently prevalent in congested, ill-ventilated and insanitary quarters of the town. The labouring classes being huddled together under such conditions are naturally exposed to infection and are responsible for a good deal of the share in this problem. The causes for this dreadful scourge are given by the Health Officer in his Annual Report which is reproduced here. He says "how fearfully overcrowded the dwellings of the majority of the labouring classes of every community are in our town and it is the massive infection that is inevitable under such appalling conditions of living rooms that is at the root of this widespread problem of the disease in the

town". The first cause, therefore, of this dreadful enemy of mankind is defective construction of houses and overcrowding. The next important cause is the poverty of the people. Bad housing which deprives the occupants of fresh air and sunlight coupled with the poverty which reduces the resisting power makes one an easy victim to the infection. Labourers being subject to both these conditions provide a fertile ground for the infection to harbour. It may, however, be interesting for the Commission to investigate what part long hours of labour and hard work producing fatigue, play in reducing the resisting power of a labourer.

The suggestions for the improvement of these conditions, lie in "improved sanitation, adequate provision of sanitary housing accommodation, education of the masses", means of isolation of the infected cases. It is with regret, that this association has to state that the local Government has so far hopelessly failed to do its duty in not making any arrangements for the provision of any Tubercular Sanitorium or Tubercular Clinics in this province, although the necessity of such institutions has repeatedly been brought to its notice. The Corporation of Rangoon on the other hand also, though fully realising the danger of the question has kept its eyes shut to the havoc its defective building bye-laws are playing in regard to this matter. The Health Officer has time out of number, called the attention of the Corporation to its defective bye-laws but nothing tangible seems to have been done. To quote the Health Officer, "The existing building bye-laws have been proved to be extremely defective. In an extremely well-laid out city, these defective bye-laws have allowed dwelling houses and buildings to be so constructed as to hardly ever allow proper air, light or direct sunshine to enter living rooms which are besides so fearfully overcrowded". The urgent necessity therefore is the alteration of these dangerous building bye-laws.

To relieve overcrowding in the town by the labouring classes the employers must provide accommodation for their labourers to the fullest extent. For the floating population, Dock labour or the other type of casual labour houses on lines similar to the Chawals in Bombay should be provided. Outdoor Tubercular Clinics should be started. All the remarks on Tuberculosis equally apply to all other Respiratory Diseases.

Under Digestive Groups or better known as Bowel Complaints come diseases such as Diarrhoea, dysentery, infantile diarrhoea, etc. These diseases like Respiratory diseases take a heavy toll of victims every year. Total deaths from these complaints in 1928 were 866 and in 1929, 915. The causes giving rise to these are such that are commonly associated with the mode of living of the labourers and must, therefore, expose them to the attacks of these diseases. Poverty, malnutrition, want of pure and fresh milk-supply, insanitary conditions, bad conservancy, insufficient supply of wholesome water form the predisposing factors for the origin of these diseases. All these conditions, unfortunately, are closely associated with our labouring classes. Improvements in the general welfare, economical aspect of life, sanitary conditions and provision of good housing accommodation with plenty of good water supply and better surroundings must improve the conditions. Poverty is the principal problem to contend with and this note intends dealing with it in some detail at a later stage. Other diseases such as Cholera, Malaria, Hook-worms, Enteric, Small-pox and allied diseases, Diphtheria, etc., are not discussed here, for in the opinion of this association they do not form a very difficult problem for Rangoon. A general information on them may be had from the Annual Reports of the Health Department.

Poverty, particularly in labouring classes, invariably paves the way for the development of diseases and epidemics. The factors contributing to poverty are inadequate scale of wages, economical conditions and temptations to waste away the already poor means of livelihood. This association intends dealing with the third cause although it may appear to be out of the purview of the questionnaire issued by the Commission. This association is convinced that the causes leading to the wastage of the earnings of the labourers are mainly responsible for the wreck and ruin of not only the individual labourer but also of his family and children. The most important of these causes is the habit of drink. The drink habit, it may be no exaggeration to say, is the curse of the Telegu labourers. A large portion of their earnings go to grog shops. If the commission pays a surprise visit to the locality wherein is situated a Toddy or Hlawze shop, its members would be simply shocked to see hundreds of these labourers congested in the shop, and squatting on the pavement in front. Such a visit will be an eye-opener to the Commission and it will give some idea of the extent to which the evil has gained ground. If a labourer wastes away his earnings on drinks there is hardly anything left for his family or children or for his own daily life. This must bring about poverty, starvation of family, malnutrition of children, reduction of resisting power against diseases, and finally death. Besides their ruination through poverty, medical opinion is unanimous that excessive and regular indulgence in drinks, as these labourers do, reduces the working capacity and thereby the earning capacity. Quite early in life a labourer is incapacitated and is thrown out of his employment. A reference is invited to a lecture lately delivered by Col. T. F. Owens, I.M.S., Principal of the Medical College at the Rotary Club on the large number of deaths taking place through starvation. The policy of the Government in regard to drink problem needs serious consideration. It is a regrettable fact that notwithstanding the havoc this evil is playing with society and with the labouring classes particularly, the Government has shown absolute apathy in the matter. No steps are taken to reduce its consumption. It has on the other hand, shown glaring callousness in repeatedly flouting the

opinion of no less a body than the Municipal Corporation of Rangoon. The Rangoon Corporation was constituted the Excise Advisory Committee for this town. Every time the Corporation differed from the Collector of Rangoon in its policy of locating liquor shops in this town or on the necessity or otherwise of a shop at a particular quarter, the views of the Excise Advisory Committee, the Corporation, were invariably rejected. The Corporation eventually as a protest against the unsympathetic attitude of the Government decided to have nothing to do with the Government in this matter and refused to act as the Excise Advisory Committee. Drinks being a source of attractive revenue, the Government under some pretext or the other, refuses to do anything that may lead to the reduction of the easily earned revenue. In other words it takes back from the labourer by one hand what has been paid to him by the other. Under the flimsy excuse of providing minimum of alcohol for the consumption of those who must have drink, number of grog shops are placed on thoroughfares, important centres, near public places and places of worship and education. No heed whatsoever is paid to residents of the quarters where-in these nuisances are thrust against their wishes. In such a way, this association submits, is provided not only the requirement for those who need it but a temptation is put in the way of the residents of the quarter. If these temptations were removed from the quarters where the labourers predominate and instead provisions of healthy means of recreations such as refreshment-rooms, etc., recommended, it will go a long way in reforming the habit of those who at present run to grog shops and squander away their earnings producing unhealthy conditions. It is therefore, suggested that the Commission should inquire into the advisability of recommending

1. Reduction of Liquor Shops.
2. Restriction of the hours of business of liquor shops.
3. Grant of Local Option.
4. Provision of refreshment and recreation rooms for labourers.
5. Reading rooms, etc.

If steps are taken to reduce the facilities for obtaining drink they would go a very long way in ameliorating the lot of labour. They would save them from disease, ruination of health, misery of their families. There would certainly be a reduction in Infantile Mortality, high death rate and it would also help to produce a healthy town and a healthy nation.

#### CHAIRMAN, RANGOON DEVELOPMENT TRUST.

The Rangoon Development Trust was constituted under the Rangoon Development Trust Act, 1920 (Burma Act V of 1920), and came into being in the beginning of 1921. The preamble of the Act begins as follows:—

“Whereas it is expedient to make provision for the improvement and expansion of the City of Rangoon and for the development of certain areas in and around the said City with the object of securing proper sanitary conditions, amenity and convenience to the persons living in such areas.....”

Section 32 of the Act states:—

“The Board may, subject to the control of the Local Government and the provisions of this Act, undertake any works and incur any expenditure for the improvement, expansion or development of the City or of any area in the vicinity thereof to which the Local Government may, by notification, declare this Act to apply, and for the purpose of framing and executing such town planning schemes as may be necessary from time to time.”

Chapter IV (Sections 38 to 57) contains provisions for the working out of town planning schemes, but it has not been found possible to put the sections of this chapter into operation.

2. The main duties of the Board have been the administration and development of the Government Estate of 3,380 acres and the Trust Estate of 239 acres. The Government Estate is vested in the Board, and the Trust lands were bought with borrowed money in the early days of the Trust. The Trust Estate has this year been taken over at the figure of its cost by the Government Estate Fund and is now amalgamated with the Government Estate. The Trust during the period of its existence has been occupied with the reclamation, layout and equipment of the Government Estate in Rangoon, and this work is not yet completed. When the roads, drains and other equipment of an area have been brought up to a standard which is agreed upon between the Trust and the Corporation of Rangoon, works executed by the Trust are made over to the Corporation for maintenance. The co-operation between the Trust and the Corporation which is essential under the existing scheme has been rendered possible by the representation which the Corporation has on the Board and by the good relations which have been maintained between the staffs of the Trust and the Corporation.

3. As regards the housing problem, the Trust has up to the present done nothing direct. It has given no facilities for the acquisition of land for work-on houses, and does not consider that such form of subsidy is suitable for present conditions.

During the early years of the Trust, up to about 1924, while the local Government was considering fostering schemes of co-operative housing, the Trust was regarded as a suitable body to assist in an undertaking of this nature. Owing to the difficulties in which the co-operative movement became involved and also to the financial difficulties which came upon the Trust about the same time, since 1924 proposals on this subject have been in complete abeyance.

In December 1929 a reference was made to the Trust and other bodies by the local Government on the subject of the Provision of Chawls for the Labour Class in Rangoon. Copies of this letter have probably been made over to the Royal Commission by the local Government. In this letter the opinion of the Trust was asked concerning proposals to impose a surcharge on the existing tax on out-going passengers and to devote the proceeds of this surcharge to the benefit of Indians coming to Burma—

- (a) for providing a shelter for immigrants at Rangoon; and
- (b) for providing cooly barracks in Rangoon.

A further suggestion was that the provision of these cooly barracks should be entrusted to the Rangoon Development Trust. These proposals were considered by the Board, and the enclosures to this note show the attitude of the Board, which on certain conditions, is favourable to the scheme. Enclosure A gives the recommendations made to the Board by a Special Committee of Inquiry which was appointed by the Board. This Committee was not limited to members of the Board, but included several other gentlemen who were in a position to give information on the housing question and were specially interested in it. Enclosures B and C give the resolution of the Board on the subject and a statement of the general conditions which the Board considered should govern any scheme. Enclosure D contains extracts from the explanatory letter with which the Chairman forwarded to the local Government the opinion of the Board.

4. As regards the staff employed by the Trust, it may be said that it is so small that it requires no special measures. Works are not carried out departmentally but by contractors. The actual strength is 25 skilled and 42 unskilled workmen, and a detailed statement has been furnished to Mr. S. A. S. Tyabji who has joined the Royal Commission for its work in Burma.

#### ENCLOSURE A.

Extract Item No. 4 from the Minutes of the Special Committee Meeting of the Board of Trustees held on the 15th March 1930 and confirmed by the Board at its meeting held on the...  
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4. After some further discussion it was agreed to make the following recommendations to the Board:—

- (1) That the additional tax of Re. 1 per out-going male passenger be accepted as the financial basis for a scheme for providing additional accommodation for the cooly classes. (Mr. Keay dissenting).
- (2) That the erection of a Rest-House for coolies passing through Rangoon be one of the first undertakings.
- (3) That for the management of the Rest-House the Rama Krishna Mission be approached and asked to undertake this work, or in the event of this not being found possible the management be under the Protector of Immigrants and Emigrants.
- (4) That the money received from the Special Tax be used for a scheme of building, selling or leasing the buildings, or subsidising the erection of suitable buildings.
- (5) That it is not feasible at present to go into any scheme in greater detail.

#### ENCLOSURE B.

Extract Item No. IV from the Minutes of the 110th Ordinary Meeting of the Board of Trustees held on the 3rd April 1930 and confirmed by the Board at its meeting held on the.....  
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IV.—*Provision of Chawls for the Labour Class.*—The recommendations of the special Committee appointed to consider the question of provision of chawls for the Labour Class were considered and approved. (Mr. J. W. Darwood dissenting).

*Note by Chairman.*—The minutes of the three meetings held by the Special Committee appointed to enquire into the Housing Scheme for the poorer classes are attached to the agenda of this meeting. The Board has already seen the minutes of the first two meetings of this Committee. It is now proposed that the recommendations made at the third meeting, that is the meeting held on the 15th March, be accepted by the Board and forwarded as the resolution of the Board in reply to the reference made by the local Government. It is also recommended that certain of the propositions which were accepted by the Finance Committee of the Board at its meeting held on the 30th January be also embodied in the reply of the Board. These propositions are Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 and are reproduced as an annexure to the agenda of this meeting. Propositions 5 and 6 will be modified by the acceptance of the Board of the recommendation of the Special Committee that a system of subsidising private building and of

leasing, if selling is not possible, buildings erected under the management of the Trust be added to the system of disposal outright of buildings by sale.

## ENCLOSURE C.

*Annexure to Item IV.*

1. That the improvement of housing conditions in Rangoon is a legitimate and proper function of the Trust.
2. That this improvement need not be limited to the policy which has been so far adopted, namely, the development and equipment of fresh areas for house sites, but may include the erection of buildings of a suitable type.
3. That no scheme for erecting buildings for the accommodation of the cooly population can run except at a heavy loss.
4. That the Trust is not a suitable body to undertake the management and control of buildings which might be erected for the cooly population.
7. That the loss which will probably occur in the sale of these buildings on the expenditure on land and buildings should be debited to the special tax of Re. 1 per out-going passenger.
8. That the tax should not be capitalised, and no building programme which would result in a loss greater than the annual proceeds of the tax should be undertaken.
9. That the buildings to be erected should be in the sewered area.
10. That any modification of the scheme proposed above which is to be adopted should not violate the condition that the present resources of the Trust should not be used in any way to cover losses.
11. That if the scheme is adopted the Trust will keep a separate account of the financing of it, and embody this account in the Annual Report and that any profit or loss on each year's working will be carried forward to the account of the following year.

## ENCLOSURE D.

*Extract from letter No. 3C27, dated the 24th April, 1930, from the Chairman, Rangoon Development Trust, to the Secretary to the Government of Burma Judicial Department.*

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There are two schools of thought regarding the best method of affording assistance (in dealing with the present condition of overcrowding). One is that the cooly class, which is the one in most need of assistance and which provides far the worst forms of overcrowding, must be supplied with accommodation in the heart of the town close to its work, that is, in an area the centre of which may be described as from Lewis Street to Brooking Street. This does not mean that there are not many other overcrowded areas, and other areas in which coolies swarm, but this is the largest area seriously affected. This school of thought considers that for classes such as clerks, shop assistants, etc., the correct plan is to take them out of the town and accommodate them in "garden settlements". The second school would prefer that the cooly class should be sent out of the centre of the town and accommodated in outlying parts and brought in by buses daily to work, while the centre of the town should be occupied by the clerical classes which are now finding it difficult to pay present rents.

Discussion was kept as far as possible on the question of housing coolies, as this was the basis of the reference, and it may also be said that any idea of bringing coolies in and out daily by buses does not appear to be in the least feasible. The question of garden settlements involves so much consideration of serious subsidiary problems regarding schools, bazaars, menial servants as well as of the actual preference for city life of the classes in whose interests such schemes are framed that discussion of it would have served no useful purpose. Such schemes must await the provision of funds for suburban development apart from the actual provision of houses. The object of the scheme being to provide accommodation for as many people as possible with the limited funds which the special tax will provide, it is clear that the ordinary cooly forms the class which should be dealt with.

The scheme with which consideration began was that of (a) constructing, and (b) selling at a loss equal to the annual proceeds of the tax, buildings of a class suitable for the cooly population. The second scheme was a subsidy scheme by which is meant that persons who put up new buildings of approved type in areas to be selected by the Trust should receive a building subsidy. Finally there was added to the scheme a recommendation that the Trust should lease out buildings which it had put up, if it could not sell them except at too great a loss. Each one of the above proposals has its own drawbacks and practical difficulties. The building and selling scheme requires people both willing and able to purchase. An error in siting, too great specialisation in type or too expensive construction either in materials or design, will greatly increase the loss on each building. The practical difficulties in the way of a subsidy scheme would also prove to be very great. Some of them have been indicated in the minutes of the meetings, and it is very

possible that the conditions which would be prescribed would result in an infinite amount of discussion, bargaining and disputing and an extremely small amount of building. If the scheme was made very simple, that is to say, as simple as the subsidy scheme at Home, I am afraid that the accommodation provided would be of a very unsatisfactory nature. I do not consider, however, that the subsidy scheme should be entirely abandoned. I think it would be advisable to endeavour to apply it, and worked in conjunction with the building scheme a great deal of very valuable information might be obtained. It might ultimately be possible to reduce expenditure on the building scheme and apply more and more of the tax receipts to subsidies, but I view the acceptance of a subsidy scheme without a building scheme as distinctly not worth the enormous amount of trouble which it would involve, and if it was adopted as a sole expedient I should be unwilling that the Trust should have anything to do with it.

The proposal that the Trust should lease out buildings was made at the end of the discussion, and I would view its adoption with some dismay. Its financial aspects are very difficult to foresee, but at the same time I admit its value as a last resort.

When sending on the Board's resolution further consideration of the practical difficulties in the way of the selling and leasing schemes as well as of the subsidy scheme has resulted in my working out a slightly, modified scheme of selling and of financing the sales, which would meet one of the main difficulties of the selling scheme, that is, the lack of sufficient individual capitalists who have money in their hands sufficient to buy a large building. It is clear that outright and immediate purchase will mean a very heavy loss, but the system of purchase by instalments, say 25% at sale and the balance in three more annual instalments with interest at 6%, holds out prospects that the loss on each building would be reduced to a very reasonable figure. With a mortgage on the building the Trust would be secure from material loss. This plan would, however, involve the Trust in borrowing or would mean very little building for some years. I do not think that the Trust should be involved financially in this matter, and therefore a part of the scheme would be a Government guarantee for the necessary loans for an initial period. The fund, which would have to be kept separate from Trust accounts, would be intermittently obtaining receipts from the tax and instalments of sale proceeds with interest payments. It would constantly be making payments on the partial or completed construction of buildings. A series of small loans for short terms of years would be required and to be financed economically these would be supplemented by overdrafts from a bank with a Government guarantee up to a fixed amount. This is the correct way of working such an undertaking as it extends to the buyer the cheap credit which the Government and the Trust can command.

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## COMMISSIONERS FOR THE PORT OF RANGOON.

### SEAMEN.

In the following notes the word "Seamen" is to be interpreted as meaning the crews of the Port Commissioners' dredgers, buoy vessels, launches and other floating craft.

*I. Recruitment.*—The seamen employed by the Port Commissioners are either Coringhees or Chittagonians. The Coringhees are mostly fishermen from the Coromandel Coast. The Chittagonians are river men from the Brahmaputra delta. The Coringhees are employed in heave-up boats, Assistant Harbour Masters' boats and as deck crews in the buoy vessels. The Chittagonians are used as launch crews, both deck and engine room, at look-out and light stations and also for the survey staff.

The men are recruited in Rangoon. The service appears to be popular and whenever a vacancy occurs there is no lack of suitable candidates for it. The system of recruitment has worked satisfactorily, and under present conditions no suggestion can be made for improving.

*II. Organisation of Managing Staff.*—The road to promotion lies open to any man as far as Inland Master, 1st class, or Engineer, 1st class. Promotion to certain of these grades depends on the possession of certificates. When other things are equal promotion goes by a seniority.

The experience of the officials of the Port is that the Coringhees do not, as a rule, pass in examinations and do not aspire higher than charge of a dumb craft. The Chittagonians are more ambitious and the majority of them lose no time in passing such examinations as are within their scope.

Relations between the seamen and the superior staff of the Marine department are friendly, and generally speaking the seamen appear to be happy and contented.

*III. Housing.*—Seamen employed on power driven craft live on board their respective vessels. Other seamen are housed in quarters built and maintained by the Port Commissioners. No rent is charged for these quarters. The scale of accommodation provided is in accordance with Municipal regulations and includes cookhouses and latrines.

*IV. Health.*—The general condition of the health of the seamen is good. No statistics are kept showing figures of mortality, birth rate, etc.

The Port Commissioners provide a dispensary at which all employees are treated free of charge.

*V. Welfare.*—The Port Commissioners undertake no welfare work for their seamen, and provide no educational facilities for them.

*IX. Hours.*—There are no fixed hours of work. The bulk of the work is carried out between sunrise and sunset, and work on Sundays is avoided as far as possible. The hours worked by the majority of seamen are governed by the amount of shipping using the port, and it may be said that they do not exceed an average of 8 hours a day. Seamen employed on Survey craft work long hours in the fine season, but rarely, average more than 6 hours a day in the rains. The crews of the fire-floats have to provide fire-watch during the night.

It is not considered desirable to attempt to lay down regulations to govern the working hours of seamen employed by a Port Authority.

*XII. Wages.*—The rates of wages paid to seamen employed by the Port Commissioners are set out in the Schedule of Establishment which is submitted to Government under the provisions of section 25 of the Rangoon Port Act. The rates as shown in that Schedule were revised in 1921. The revision resulted in an increase ranging between 40 and 50 per cent. of the old rates.

Fines are not frequent and none were levied in the year 1928-29.

Wages are fixed at monthly rates and are paid monthly.

Employees, the minimum pay of whose appointment is not less than Rs. 50 a month must join the Port Commissioners' Provident Fund. Other employees are granted gratuities in accordance with the by-laws framed under Section 26E of the Rangoon Port Act.

Employees are granted leave and leave allowances in accordance with the terms of by-laws framed for the grant of leave to inferior servants.

*XIII. Efficiency.*—The Coringhees employed by the Port Commissioners are, at the job in which they have specialised, namely, the handling of chain cables as efficient a body of men as one could wish for. They are hard workers, civil and amenable to discipline. The Chittagonian is a more ambitious and provident type. On the whole he gives efficient service. Many of the serangs are very skillful handlers of craft in the river. The Engineers keep their engines clean and in good running conditions. The majority are intelligent and will carry out a routine job reliably.

It is not considered that there are any steps which can be taken which could greatly improve their efficiency.

*XIV. Trade Combinations.*—This office is not aware of the existence of any trade union or similar organisation amongst the seamen employed by the Port Commissioners.

*XV. Strikes and Lock-outs.*—No strikes or lock-outs have occurred in the Port Commissioners' service.

#### DOCK LABOURERS.

The Port Commissioners employ no dock labourers on their own staff. The work of loading and unloading seagoing ships at the Port Commissioners' wharves and jetties is carried out by contract. Tenders are invited for the work and the successful tenderer recruits, pays and controls the labourers employed by him. Payment to the Contractor is made on the basis of the tonnage of cargoes landed and shipped by his agency.

The above facts will explain the reason why it is impossible for this office to reply to many of the points referred to in the statement accompanying the Government of Burma, Marine and Commerce Department's letter No. 230-R-29 (574), dated 12th July 1929.

*I. Recruitment.*—The labour employed is all Indian and is recruited either in India or locally in Rangoon. The extent of the labour force employed varies considerably from day to day. The Labour Contractor states that it fluctuates between 600 to 1,000 labourers daily.

*III. Housing.*—It is understood that the Labour Contractor provides housing for a proportion of the labour force employed by him.

*IV. Health.*—No records of health are available. No special medical facilities are provided, but labourers make use of the hospital and free dispensaries provided in the town.

*VII. Safety.*—The Working Instructions of the Traffic department, copies of which are issued to the staff in book form, include paragraphs on the subject of avoidance of accidents. Employees of the Contractor receive instruction on these points from the Port Commissioners' Wharf staff.

The returns for the year 1928-29 show that there were no fatal accidents during that year; that the number of labourers injured was 71; that the injuries sustained were mainly crushed fingers and toes, and that the injuries resulted from individual carelessness in handling cargoes.

Departmental Instructions as printed and issued to the Wharf staff include a chapter on First Aid and procedure to be observed in dealing with labourers injured in the course of duty. Certain members of the Traffic staff have obtained First Aid certificates from the St. John's Ambulance Association.

*VIII. Workmen's Compensation.*—The definition of a dock labourer as given in clause (V) of schedule 2 of the Workmen's Compensation Act would appear to cover all labourers employed by the Port Commissioners' Contractor. It may, however, be open to argument whether the labourers engaged on the work of removing goods from transit sheds to stock godowns or to warehouses after the departure of a ship, or on the work of unloading and stacking goods from railway wagons, etc., prior to the arrival of a ship, can be held to be employed for the purpose of unloading or loading a ship.

*IX. Hours.*—The work of loading and unloading seagoing ships at the Port Commissioners' Wharves and jetties goes on continuously night and day throughout the year.

The amount of work carried out and the number of labourers employed on such work varies considerably from day to day and even from hour to hour. The Labour Contractor states that his permanent labourers work or stand by "on call" for 10 hours a day and for seven days a week. His casual labourers work or stand by "on call" for a half day of 6 hours or a full day of 10 hours.

*X. Special questions relating to women, young adults and children.*—Women and children are not employed by the Labour Contractor on the work of loading and unloading ships at the Port Commissioners' wharves and jetties.

*XII. Wages.*—The rates of wages, period of payment, etc., are all matters arranged and controlled by the Labour Contractor. The Port Commissioners have no reliable data on the subject.

*XIII. Efficiency.*—Judged by local standards the labourers employed by the Port Commissioners' Contractor do, as a whole, give every efficient service. No change in the degree of efficiency has been noted in recent years.

*XIV. Trade Combinations.*—The Port Commissioners' office has no knowledge of the existence of any trade union of similar organisation amongst the dock labourers in the Port of Rangoon.

*XV. Strikes and Lock-outs.*—With the exception of one strike in 1924 there have been no strikes or lock-outs amongst the dock labourers employed on the Commissioners' wharves and jetties. The strike in question was not directly connected with the question of hours of work or rates of pay. It was organised by parties who were antagonistic to the Labour Contractors, and to their maistries, and investigation disclosed the fact that the bulk of the labourers were in complete ignorance of the reason why they were on strike.

*XVII. Administration.*—The Port Commissioners' wharves and jetties are under the immediate control of the Traffic department, the officials of which inspect them daily. Buildings, plant such as cranes, etc., are under the control of the Engineering department, and are subject to constant inspection by the senior officers of that department.

## THE BURMESE LABOUR BUREAU.

Our Bureau has not yet acquired much actual experience of labour other than shipping labour. We shall however make general observations on all branches of labour and the problems connected therewith, basing such observations on the experience gathered by us as public men, taking a general interest in labour questions.

### I.—Recruitment.

1. Recruitment of Burmese labourer as stevedore coolies was started in Rangoon during the strike in last May. Before the strike Telegu coolies were employed as stevedore coolies and were paid Rs. 1-8-0 each per shift, and during the strike but not before, they demanded Rs. 2 per shift from the stevedores who did not agree. In the period of the strike services of Burmese labourers were requisitioned by the stevedores and a daily wages of Rs. 1-12-0 each per shift was given. In a few cases Rs. 2 per shift was given. On the 24th May 1930, an agreement was arrived at between the stevedores and Telegu labourers that wages should be increased to Rs. 1-12 per shift and Telegu labourers were to rejoin work on the 26th morning. Burmese labourers were not informed of this settlement and when they went down as usual to the foreshore on the morning of the 26th May 1930 to get postings they came across Telegu labourers. There was a clash which led to the last serious riot.

On the second day of the riot an agreement was arrived at between some Indian and Burmese leaders that Burmese and Indian labourers should work in harmony on 50—50 basis and leaders on both sides should try to stop the riot. A Conciliation Board was later constituted by

Government to settle the dispute between the Burmese and Telegu labourers and after due deliberation the 50—50 basis agreement was recommended by the Board. Our Bureau was organized on the 12th June 1930 with the object of organizing the Burmese labour with a view to increase its efficiency and thus to assist the Stevedores and shipping Agents to get the right type of Burmese labourers. We opened a register calling upon all Burmans who wanted Stevedoring coolie work to register their names. Within eight days the number of registered coolies and their gangs went up to nearly 28,000 and 400 respectively. As it became evident that the supply was much more than the possible demand we had to stop further registration. The existence and functions of this Bureau were intimated to all Stevedores and Shipping Agents in Rangoon, but except from one Stevedore and the Cargo Superintendent of B. I. S. N. Co., Limited, who approved of our scheme, no reply has been received by this Bureau from the others.

2. (ii) It is estimated that 500 to 600 Burmese Stevedore labourers are employed in each shift.

Working days or nights of twelve hours.

Burmese labourers (June 1930)—36,052.

Telegu labourers (June 1930)—55,042.

Burmese labourers (July 1930)—22, 673

Telegu labourers (July 1930)—32, 035.

Out of the total number of labourers, the number of Burmese employed is 39·56 per cent. and that of Telegu 60·44 per cent. for June and 41·44 per cent. and 58·56 respectively for July 1930. Figures for the months of August and September have not yet been obtained, but we surmise that there will be little or no improvement in the ratio of Burmese labourers to that of Telegu labourers.

We requested the Conciliation Board for the amount of tonnage worked by both Burmese and Telegu labourers respectively to test the efficiency of the former as against the latter. However, we have not been successful in our attempt to get those figures.

7. (i) It is difficult to determine the approximate extent and character of unemployment amongst indigenous races of Burma in the absence of authoritative statistical information on the subject, but it is generally recognized that there is unemployment to a large extent. A resolution was moved at the last session of the Burma Legislative Council by U. Ba Pe, the Leader of the Peoples Party to enquire into this question, but Government opposed it and voted it down by the use of the official bloc and of Government nominated members.

(ii) (c) Unemployment of Burmans is caused mainly by exploitation of labour, i.e., by importing cheap Indian labour whose standard and cost of living is admittedly lower than that of the Burmese labourers, dislocation of cottage industries, evaporation of capital, influx of Indian middle classes, present educational system and loss in agricultural income.

Burma's industrial undertakings may be classified as follows :—(This list is not exhaustive).

1. Rice Milling Industry,
2. Timber Milling Industry,
3. Earth-Oil Refineries,
4. Cotton Ginning Industries,
5. Vegetable Oil-Milling Industries
6. Hand-weaving,
7. Burma Railways,
8. Indian Navigation.
9. Transport of Goods by Road,
10. Public Works Department,
11. Public Bodies,
12. Mines,
13. Quarries,
14. Plantations.

In all big rice mills in Rangoon, Moulmein and Bassein both skilled and unskilled labour is manned almost exclusively by Indian labourers and in all small mills in Lower Burma Indians are generally employed as labourers.

In big saw mills of Rangoon and Moulmein Burmese skilled labourers may be found along with a greater number of Indians and a few Chinese, but there is almost no unskilled Burmese labourers. Small saw mills in Lower Burma employ generally Indian labourers. In the case of those small saw mills in Upper Burma, Burmese labourers are employed exclusively excepting as firemen and engine drivers.

In all earth-oil refineries in Burma a greater portion of labourers are Indians. As regards cotton ginning and vegetable oil-milling factories which are situated in the dry zone of Upper

Burma, we find a greater number of Burmese labourers employed. In the moribund industry of hand weaving all workers are exclusively Burmans.

Burma Railways, employ different races of India with quite a small percentage of Burmans in its Traffic Department. Coolies employed for handling goods for discharging and loading of wagons are exclusively Telegus in Lower Burma and generally Burmese in Upper Burma. In the Permanent Way Department of the Burma Railways, Oriyas predominate while a small percentage of Burmese are employed in Upper Burma. The Loco Department is manned by skilled labourers, and there is almost no Burmese excepting a small number of Anglo-Burmans employed. Most labourers employed are Indian and Chinese. In the construction of buildings Chinese carpenters and Indian masons were used.

For inland navigation of Burma, the Irrawaddy Flotilla Co., Limited, holds the monopoly practically. All crew employed are Indians. In the case of lower Burma handling of goods for discharging and loading of launches and steamers is done mostly by Indians whereas in Upper Burma it is done generally by Burmans.

Throughout the whole Province bullock carts are used for transport of goods by road. About thirty years ago, there were Burmese cart drivers only. If there were Indians then, the numbers must be almost negligible. Now a great portion of this work has passed into the hands of Indian cart drivers who ousted the Burmans and are still ousting them by undercutting their rates.

The Public Works Department of the Government of Burma annually spends a few crores of rupees in construction and re-construction, maintenance and repairs, of roads, buildings irrigation canals and embankments. The number of labourers employed through contractors or by the Department itself is enormous. Excepting in the dry zone of Burma like Myingyan, Meiktila, Kyaukse, Mandalay and Shwebo, where Burmese labour is cheap, Indians are employed throughout. So the Burmese Labourers get very little benefit out of this Department compared to Indian labourers.

In the case of Public bodies, small municipalities and District Councils most of which were constituted only at the inauguration of the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms to Burma, are sympathetic towards the Burmese labourers. As far as practicable they endeavoured to give work to Burmese labourers. But it is different with Public Bodies in Rangoon. The Corporation of Rangoon which employs about 6,000 labourers does not employ Burmese labourers, and it is the same with the Port Trust and the Rangoon Development Trust. We approached these Public Bodies with a view to getting some work as a start for Burmese labourers and it is regrettable that there has been no sign whatever of their intentions to recruit Burmese labour in the near future. More or less, similar conditions prevail in places like Moulmein and Bassein.

As regards mines, a great majority of the labourers employed in Bawdwin Mines at Namtu are Yunanes and Gurkha with a very small percentage of Burmans. The Ruby Mines at Mogok have Mainthas for their workmen and in the mines in the south of the Tenasserim Division Indians and Chinese labourers are employed as against an equal proportion of Burmese labourers. At Yenangyaung Oil fields we find also about 50 per cent. of unskilled Burmese labourers employed.

According to our estimate in all quarries and rubber plantations in Burma, labour is shared half and half between the Indians and the Burmese.

On the whole such a preponderance of imported labour over that of this country in all industrial undertakings cannot be a satisfactory state of affairs. It is all very well for employers to say that Burmese labour is not forthcoming and that it is not cheap enough, but the fact remains that Government as well as large employers of labour have not thought seriously over the matter. The accusation that Burmese labour is not forthcoming will not hold good now, when we can register in eight days about 30,000 Burmese coolies. It was doubtless convenient for them to recruit cheap Indian labour whenever and wherever necessary, but the general effect of this is unemployment to a very serious extent of not only Burmese workers and artisans but also of traders and educated classes. We learn with dismay, that Government is now considering the question of abolishing elementary teachership examination because no work can be provided for about 1800 elementary certificated teachers. The only relief actually provided by Government for unemployed indigenous races would seem to be the provision and extension of jails all over Burma to lodge starving Burmese criminals who would, but for lack of means to earn an honest livelihood, have been useful workers, and who find jails as better places to live in than to be workless and starving outside them. In a few years back Government attempted to explain the abnormal rise in crime figures as a crime wave, but we cannot say it has yet realised that the crime wave does not show any sign of subsiding.

#### 7. (iii) —

1. Adoption of the policy of employing Burmans wherever available in Burma would tend to alleviate the present distressing conditions of unemployment and the provision of due safeguards against unreasonable rates of wages which may easily be done by determining what the fair living wage of Burmese labourer is, and prescribing it as the minimum wage.

2. Provision of means for workless Burmans may also be devised. It is not impossible if done systematically. Public Works Department and Public bodies in co-operation with executive officers or with Public leaders will be able to take concerted action in the matter.

3. To restrict Indian immigration.

### III.—Housing.

16. In some cases employers provide their labourers with accommodation, but from the reports of the Factory Inspector, conditions of such accommodation are not satisfactory in most cases.

Burmese Stevedore coolies employed in Rangoon reside in their own houses or in those of their relatives in different parts of Rangoon.

Housing problem for the Indian labourers in Rangoon and the condition of what is known as lodging houses have been sufficiently dealt with in the Report on the Public Health of Rangoon by a Special Committee appointed by Government on the 10th September 1926 and we need not make any comment on the dire wretchedness of these helpless creatures who have to live more like animals than human beings. No Burman, however poor he may be, would live under such circumstances. There was consensus of opinion that *chauls* should be erected for them in convenient places. The only difference of opinion is as to who should carry out that responsibility, the Corporation of Rangoon or the Rangoon Development Trust. We are inclined to the view that sanitary dwelling places should be built by the Rangoon Development Trust and the necessary cost should be met by raising a loan. The Terminal Tax of Rs. 2 levied on each person leaving the Port of Rangoon should be increased to Rs. 3 and half the amount so realised should be utilised to repay the above loan.

### IV.—Health. V.—Welfare. VI.—Education.

There are no social amenities for labourers worth mentioning. The only exception being that the B. O. C. in Yenangyaung provide hospitals and dispensaries and erect buildings for social functions and religious purposes and schools for children of labourers. We have no information on this point from Bawdwin Mines, Namta.

A great percentage of Industrial labourers are Indians who are illiterate and who are accustomed to destitution in their own country and seem satisfied with their present lot. This will perhaps be grasped as an excuse by employers to say that time is not yet ripe for launching any benefit scheme for the health, welfare and education of labourers. But, after all is said and done, Indians are human beings, however poor and illiterate they may be. They are bound to appreciate and will benefit by any such schemes, such as sickness insurance, old age pension, maternity benefit, etc., even when a small start can be made.

### VII.—Safety.

43. Existing regulations in factories, mines, railways and docks seem adequate. But the Factory Department has no adequate staff at present and we do not think sufficient amount of careful inspection has been done. We should have more factory inspectors and have more stringent inspection and enforcement of regulations.

### VIII.—Workmen's compensation.

51. Workmen's Compensation Act has been brought into force in Burma a few years back. We are not in a position to offer any remarks.

### IX.—Hours.

55. Hours worked per week and per day.

(i) Normal.—The practice in the case of saw mills is somewhat uniform. The labourers work 60 hours per week and 10 hours per day.

56. Days worked per week.—6 days in a week.

60. (i) The existing practice is that the workers join work at 6 a.m. and there is a break at 11 a.m. to 12 a.m. and rejoin work from 12 a.m. to 5 p.m.

61. Workers have one day's rest in a week. Buddhist employers close their factories on the Sabbath day in the week. In other cases work is closed on Sunday.

### XII.—Wages.

Burmese Stevedore labourers get a daily wage of Rs. 1-12 out of which the *gaungs* or headmen deduct a commission of annas two per head. The *gaungs* receive a daily wage of Rs. 3 per head.

\* \* \* \* \*

the Rice Mills, in fact the reverse is sometimes the case, and many of them lose heavily and have eventually to give up. The Rice Miller generally finds difficulty in getting a reliable Head Maistry to take the place of one who has thrown up his contract. Many years ago, we believe, the Head Maistries did make good profits and probably they exploited the coolies a good deal. The coolies then were much more under the thumb of the Head Maistry than they are today and he was able to do more or less as he liked with them and could compel them to work until they had cleared off their debt to him. Today such is not the case and any attempt at exploitation by the Head Maistry only means that he loses his coolies and his advances.

The commission deducted by the Head Maistries from the amounts paid by the Rice Millers for work done is not, by any means, excessive and seldom exceeds 10% and in many cases is only 5%.

All coolies are grouped into gangs and each gang has its own Maistry who generally gets at least double the earnings of each individual cooly. The Head Maistry makes advances to the gang Maistries who in turn make advances to the individual coolies. Each gang also has its own clerk whose duty it is to keep an account of the work done and to see that payment is made accordingly.

The Head Maistry on his part also employs under maistries and clerks whose duties are to transmit orders to the different gang maistries and to see that the work is properly carried out. The clerks' duties are to keep an account of the work done and to check these with the accounts rendered by the gang clerks. There is little chance of victimization of the coolies by the Head Maistry as each gang clerk watches the interests of the gang which employs him.

On the whole the system works well and it is difficult to see how it can be much improved upon. The idea of a Labour Bureau to be started by the three Big European Rice Millers is quite impracticable. In the first place the millers would become their own Head Maistries and would have to advance large sums of money to the gang maistries who each control, say, 25 to 30 coolies. This the Rice Millers are not prepared to do under any circumstances and even if they were so prepared they cannot do this as efficiently as the Head Maistry who knows his men far better than the Miller could ever know them. The Miller cannot be his own Head Maistry at no extra cost to himself, and he must employ clerks and under-maistries in the same manner as the Head Maistries now do. In order, therefore, to recover the cost of such staff he would either have to reduce the rates payable for work done or pay out of his own pocket.

It would be quite impracticable to carry on the work in a large rice mill under any other system than the present gang system. Any other method would simply mean chaos. Under the gang system the Head Maistries' clerks keep an account of the work done by each gang day by day, and the gangs are paid accordingly. It is doubtful whether the coolies themselves would work under any other system than the gang system—except of course as daily or monthly labourers—and if they did so work it would be necessary for the miller to employ a large number of clerks to keep an account of the work done by each individual cooly. In practice this method would be quite impossible. The gang system, therefore, is the only workable system and under the suggested Labour Bureau we presume it is intended that this shall continue. If the present gang maistries do, in any way, victimize the members of their gang under the Head Maistry regime, what is to prevent them going so under the regime of Labour Bureau? Nothing that we can see.

Mr. Iyer states that

“by a slight regulation of the demand and by a judicious pooling of the labour available from time to time it should not be difficult for the work to be managed by a common agency.”

He does not explain how the demand could be regulated, but we presume he means that Millers should so arrange their business that the amount of labour required by them at any time should, as far as possible, coincide with the amount available from the sources controlled by the Bureau. The conditions of the rice trade, however, do not permit of this and we see no grounds for Mr. Bennison's statement on page 81 of his report that

“the work could probably be spread over the year more evenly than at present.”

Mills must work day and night, or day only, or intermittently by day according to the volume of supply of paddy and demand for rice. These are the dominating factors in the trade and cannot be subordinated to any artificial regulation by the millers themselves or by a Bureau of Labour.

All rice mills in Rangoon must keep a large number of coolies on the premises day and night, especially during the busy season. It is not quite clear to us in what manner the proposed Bureau is supposed to function. Is it supposed to have at its command and in its own cooly barracks a number of gangs of coolies which would be sent to the different mills on request, or is it supposed to house the coolies in the existing barracks belonging to the mills concerned? If the former, the scheme would be unworkable in that those mills situated far away from the Bureau's barracks would always obtain their coolies later than those mills near at hand and they would also leave their work earlier. If the latter is intended, we cannot see what advantage

it has over the present system. As it is now, each mill has about sufficient coolies on hand to perform the normal work. Sometimes one mill may have more than normal work to do and in such cases the Head Maistry may obtain coolies from a mill near at hand at which the work is slack or he may bring daily coolies from Rangoon. If all the mills are working full bore, as is generally the case during the first three or four months of the season, it is not possible for one mill to draw labour from another and the only way to supplement the existing labour is to bring in daily coolies from Rangoon. How then is a Labour Bureau going to improve matters? The Bureau cannot increase the available supply of labour unless it maintains a surplus of coolies itself or does exactly as the Head Maistry now does and we maintain that the latter can and does do this as well as, if not better than, a Bureau could do it. If the Bureau is going to keep a number of gangs of coolies waiting to fill the requirements of any one mill, who is going to pay these coolies in the event of no mill requiring them? Again where is the Bureau going to get its labour in the first place? The Head Maistry having been dispensed with, it will either have to recruit its labour itself by paying advances to gang maistries or come to an arrangement with the Head Maistry to take over his coolies with their advances. The latter would suit the Head Maistry admirably, but neither method would appeal to the rice miller, if he had to finance the Bureau.

In Mr. Bennison's report pages 77 to 79 illustrations are given of the distribution of the sums paid by the miller to the Head Maistry, and it is stated that the surcharge of 20% paid by the miller is all kept by the Head Maistry. As a matter of fact the surcharge of 20% has been gradually reduced until it has now disappeared altogether so that the allocation, as shown on page 79 of Mr. Bennison's report, would now be as follows:—

						Rs.	₹.	P.
Head Maistry	..	..	..	..	..	76	12	0
Stitching Sub-Maistry	..	..	..	..	..	50	0	0
Bagging do.	..	..	..	..	..	23	14	0
Stitching coolies	..	..	..	..	..	153	0	0
Bagging coolise	..	..	..	..	..	189	2	0
						<hr/>		
						492	12	0
						<hr/>		

The rank and file of the coolies therefore get approximately 70% of the amount paid by the mill owner, whereas the Head Maistry gets about 15½%. The latter does not seem at all excessive considering the risks the Head Maistry has to run and the amount he loses in advances in one way and another. In point of fact however, we believe that is a much higher percentage than the average Head Maistry receives. As far as we can ascertain from investigations made at our mills the Head Maistries are seldom able to retain more than 5% to 10% of the total paid by the millers.

The throughput of a large mill in a year may be anything from 30 lacs to 60 lacs of baskets, and the average probably about 40 lacs. The total coolie bills on a throughput of 40 lacs amounts to about Rs. 1,40,000 so that the Head Maistry would retain at the very most about Rs. 14,000 from which he has to pay his own clerks and assistant maistries and meet losses in advances. No miller would care to undertake the work and the risk involved for this sum.

The only other method by which the work at rice mills could be carried out would be by having the coolies on the mill pay roll. In practice, however, this method would be quite unworkable and would necessitate an army of foremen or maistries, and even then the miller would never be sure that he was only paying for labour actually employed. It would be impossible for him to keep trace of all the coolies and it would therefore be necessary to work on the gang system. This means the retention of gang maistries and it would not be possible for the employer to prevent the gang maistries from retaining a percentage of his coolies' earnings even if these were paid direct to each coolie. This system of "dustoorie" to the headman cannot be swept away by a mere change of method of payment. In the case of durwan staffs for instance, it is well known that the jamadar or Head Durwan collects a monthly contribution from each durwan though each man is paid direct, and it would be quite impossible to stop this practice.

The present system has stood the test of years and on the whole it has worked well. We cannot see any other method that will work anything like as smoothly or as well. Any other system than that now in vogue is not only going to increase the miller's difficulties, but also the cost of his labour bill and he cannot afford to do anything that will make it more difficult than it is at present to meet the competition of other rice producing countries.

The foregoing represents the joint views of Messrs. Bulloch Brothers, Ltd., Anglo-Burma Rice Co., Ltd. and ourselves.

**Volume X.**

**Part II.**

# Minutes of Evidence taken before the Royal Commission on Labour in India.

## BURMA.

### First Meeting.

#### NAMTU.

Wednesday, 22nd October 1930.

#### PRESENT :

The Rt. Hon'ble J. H. WHITLEY (*Chairman*).

Sir VICTOR SASSOON, Bart.

Sir ALEXANDER MURRAY, Kt., C.B.E.

Mr. A. G. CLOW, C.I.E., I.C.S.

Mr. KABIR-UD-DIN AHMED, BAR-AT-LAW.

Mr. J. TAIT.

U AYE MAUNG.

Mr. S. A. S. TYABJI.

} *Assistant Commissioners.*

Mr. S. LALL, I.C.S.

Mr. A. DIBDIN.

} *Joint Secretaries.*

Mr. JOHN CLIFF.

Miss B. M. LE POER POWER.

Lt.-Col. A. J. H. RUSSELL, C.B.E.,

I.M.S. (*Medical Assessor*).

Mr. E. HOGAN TAYLOR (General Manager), Mr. A. R. OBERLANDER (General Superintendent), Mr. A. B. COLQUHOUN (Mine Superintendent), Mr. C. A. RENO (Chief Time-Keeper), Mr. R. A. Sharpe (Chief Accountant), Mr. H. T. TAYLOR (Forest Manager), Mr. L. McDONOUGH (Railway Manager), and Dr. J. O. HAMILTON (Chief Medical Officer), representatives of the Burma Corporation, Ltd.

M-1. *The Chairman* : For how long have you had this contract bonus system working ?—(*Mr. Colquhoun*) I think we have had the system working just as it stands now for about 2 years, and we had a slightly different systems for 2 years before that ; we have had a contract system on the stopes for about 4 years.

M-2. For how long have you had a system of direct payment of the worker instead of his being paid through the *maistry* ?—I would say about 2 years.

M-3. What were the evils of the previous custom which led you to introduce this system of direct payment and contract bonus with a certain minimum?—We have about 120 stopes and about 120 contracts. We have paid the contractor and sometimes he has gone away with the whole of the money not paying his labour anything. Another trouble arose out of the fact that while the contractor was paid at the end of the month, in the mean time he had to supply his coolies with means to live. If he advances cash, he charges interest which is as a rule high; if he provides provisions, he arranges it through the native bazaar and he gets another commission on that. Then on final accounting, instead of taking 10 per cent. of the net profit according to the Indian system, he took 10 per cent. of the gross earnings of the whole contract as his commission, dividing the rest among his coolies. If he had particular friends in his contract, he gave them more of a bonus, and we found it was not shared equally at all. Another trouble arose in this way: if one of the five men of his shift was off work through illness or any other cause, we could not get men to go on the contract in his place, because the men said the contractor would not pay them what their earnings would be as bonus on the contract. In order to work efficiently we had to arrive at other means. Under our present system everybody who works in that contract though he may be a daily worker put in to replace a man who is sick or off work, shares equally, whether he is of the original contract or not. Another reason why we changed the system is that we found that coolies coming to work wanted some means of subsistence for the first few days; if they worked for a contractor they were in difficulties and found themselves in the hands of the contractor. Under the present system the worker has his ticket punched showing the number of days he has worked, regardless of whether he is on day or contract work. He brings that ticket to the office where it is checked; he can then get 50 per cent. of the value of his wages in stores or other supplies provided by our provision store. At the end of the month the worker has his wages paid to him in cash by the Corporation. He is registered with the Corporation at a certain rate, say Rs. 2 or Rs. 1-8-0, according to his skill. For the first 15 days he is paid for the number of days he has worked at that rate; he received his pay in a pay envelope. At the end of the month we work out his total wages for the whole 25 or 26 days he has worked, and we pay that to him *plus* the bonuses made on the contract. The great benefit is that all men who are working on the contract system are content and satisfied with the method of payment; they believe that they get what they earn. Under the old contract system there were always a good many complaints by men that they were not getting from the contractor what they were entitled to, that the contractor said one man was worth more than another because he was a relative. Another great benefit is that 10 per cent. of the gross earnings is not put into the contractor's pocket at once; only 10 per cent. of the net earnings goes to him, the difference being shared by the men who work in the contract.

M-4. In fact, your system provides both a minimum wage and a group bonus for good work over and above the minimum wage?—Yes. It practically is not a contract system but a bonus system though the three leading men, one on each shift, sign a form of contract in which we specify that for certain sets of ground taken out a certain payment will be made: we specify the way it is to be done in black and white, so that they know what they have

to do and that there will be no change in the rate. Certain conditions are specified as to how he shall do the work, but otherwise it is not a contract because we do not give him the money ; we pay the money to the individual workers.

M-5. It is really a group bonus system ?—Yes.

M-6. *Sir Alexander Murray* : What is the position in the 18 per cent. of your stopes which are not on this bonus system ?—The reason why we have not got all the stopes in the mine working on contract is that some are bad. Generally it is more efficient and cheaper for us to put a stope on contract, but certain stopes are dangerous, which require constant European supervision and highly skilled men to work them. Under the contract bonus system the men go in with the object of getting as much rock out as possible, but in these dangerous places that might cause serious accidents. Men in such places are therefore paid daily wages and if they do good work we may give them a bonus in the end. As a rule they are highly skilled men earning Rs. 1-12-0 or Rs. 2 per day.

M-7. I should like to know how your total 15,000 employees are distributed as regards the Mines Act, the Factories Act and the Railways Act, and how many are employed by the Forest Department ?—(*Mr. Hogan Taylor*) I will have the figures prepared.

M-8. Do you recruit any labour for any purpose ?—At present we do not recruit any labour, nor have we attempted to recruit labour during the time I have been here, which is since Christmas 1925.

M-9. You have labour from China ?—During the cold season, from December to March inclusive, a considerable number of Chinese come here for employment in the mine ; most of them leave at the end of the cold season.

M-10. Do they walk here ?—There is no other means of transport.

M-11. You get Ghurkhas coming from Almora ; it must cost them Rs. 30 or 40 to come here ; who provides the money ?—I presume their friends and relatives do ; the Company does not.

M-12. How are they attracted to the mines and at whose expense ?—By their friends and relatives I presume. I do not know definitely.

M-13. Have you a Personnel Officer at all here ?—We have a Time Officer both here and at Bawdwin. (*Mr. Colquhoun*) The new men who come from Almora and Nepal are brought here by friends working in the mine who finance them. A little while ago some of our men said to me that they had brought men here and were feeding them, that they wanted work.

M-14. When a man who has been with you for a year or two wants to go home, what is the procedure ?—All he has got to do is to turn in his ticket ; then if he is on daily wages he is paid up to date ; if he is on contract and goes before the end of the month, before the contract is measured up, he is paid his daily wage or its equivalent ; he would not get his bonus. That bonus would not revert to the Company but would be divided among the remaining men on that contract. Each man has a registration ticket with his name, his father's name, the district from which he comes, his height, and prominent marks on the face and so on. On that ticket is entered the word " Discharged "

with the date, which means that he is allowed to go home. He is given that card so that he can produce it when he returns, say at the end of 6 months when we can look up his number and find out his history. He is given preference over any new coolie. The rule has been that if a coolie goes away when he comes back he is paid 2 annas less per day than he was drawing at the time he went away; at the end of 3 months, if his work is satisfactory and he is recommended by his foreman, he received back the 2 annas and is paid at the rate at which he was paid before he went away.

M-15. How do you replace that man when he goes away?—If he is on a contract, we send for the contractor or head man of that shift and ask him to recommend some man; when he makes his recommendation, we look up the register to see if that man is a good man; if he is satisfactory, we put him in the contract. We always give preference to a man who has worked for us before. We sometimes specify in a contract that there shall be two new men working in order that they may learn the work. Such a man would be earning Re. 1-4-0, and if he went away we should ask the contractor to recommend another man earning the same amount. If a skilled man earning Re. 1-12-0 were to go away, we should ask the contractor to recommend a man of similar status.

M-16. Do you have complaints from men returning to the mine after going away that they cannot get employment?—No.

M-17. *Mr. Clow*: Are there any men in Bawdwin waiting for jobs now?—I do not think there are any now; there are certainly not more than two dozen. The reason there are not more is possibly that they know we have curtailed production to a certain extent.

M-18. Are the Oriyas financed on the way here in the way you have said?—(*Mr. Oberlander*) Yes; we provide nothing whatever in the form of finance to people who come here; they are financed by relatives or friends here. The turnover of labour here is relatively small; the workers stay with us a long time.

M-19. Have you any figures of turnover generally?—(*Mr. Renou*) It varies day by day; at the present time I suppose we have a turnover of 10 to 15 men a day; that is new engagements and men leaving. Some months ago it was 30 or 40. (*Mr. Oberlander*) Some men have been with us as long as I have been here.

M-20. Perhaps you would let us have figures showing the number of men who have been with you less than 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 10 and 15 years and who are still in your employment?—Yes.

M-21. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: Could we have the labour percentage turnover for those years, because some of those men may have gone away and come back again?—Yes.

M-22. *Mr. Clow*: How many men do you engage in a year?—(*Mr. Renou*) I could not tell you. There are people going away on holiday every day; we practically never vary in our grand total.

M-23. Some time ago you changed the method of payment of wages from monthly to half-monthly?—That is so.

M-24. Why was that done?—We stopped the coupon system on our store and to meet their requirements, the management decided to pay the men fortnightly. Afterwards the coupon system was reinstated, but we continued to pay them fortnightly. At present we give them coupons for 50 per cent. of the wages they have earned and also pay them fortnightly.

M-25. Was there any objection to paying wages fortnightly?—The Company prefer it.

M-26. *The Chairman*: Then that was done of your own motion, not because of any Government regulation or order?—Yes.

M-27. Did you find it more costly?—Yes, but not much more.

M-28. *Mr. Clow*: The coupon system is a system by which credit is given at the stores?—No, a man who has earned Rs. 10 can get a coupon for Rs. 5 which enables him to buy goods at the stores to the value of Rs. 5.

M-29. Do the great majority of men buy their provisions at the stores?—No: most of the people who take advantage of the stores are clerks; the coolies do not take nearly so much advantage of the stores as the clerks do. The coolies do not seem to require the stores; they can get more suitable material for themselves in the bazaar.

M-30. *Miss Power*: But are not the prices lower in your stores than in the bazaar?—Yes, for certain things I believe they are, though of course I cannot say for certain. At the stores we do not sell vegetables, fish and that sort of thing, which the coolie requires, though we sell rice. (*Mr. Hogan Taylor*) I should say definitely that the price of our rice is less than that of the rice in the ordinary bazaar.

M-31. *Mr. Clow*: You do not attempt to control the price in the ordinary bazaar?—No, except that there is an indirect control in that we buy rice in Mandalay as cheaply as possible and sell it as cheaply as possible. The store is run on the principle of making a minimum profit. The selling price of everything is fixed so as to yield the smallest possible profit. We sell all commodities as cheaply as possible so as to keep down the prices in the local bazaar; if we did not do so, prices would soar and we should have trouble.

M-32. You have a contract system in the mills?—Yes, and in the smelter.

M-33. That is a different system, is it not?—Yes. (*Mr. Oberlander*) At the mill the men who are on contract are our Chinamen. The contractor is paid the full amount and he pays his men. The work of breaking sinter pots is given to a contractor at so much per pot; he contracts with his coolies individually to break each pot and he pays them.

M-34. Do you see that the men are paid by the contractor?—Not in the case of that particular contractor; he has been with the company many years and we have had no complaint from his coolies who are all men earning high wages. He employs 240 men who are earning from Rs. 2 to Rs. 2-8-0 per day. The contractor's commission for himself, plus the payment of his time keepers and that sort of thing, amounts to about 1 anna in the rupee.

M-35. There are three shifts of 8 hours each in the mill, the smelter and the mine?—Yes.

M-36. In the mine how do you arrange for change-over of shifts ; does a shift remain down until it is relieved ?—(*Mr. Colquhoun*) The 8 hours is practically from the time they start down the shaft until the time they get back. The same cage that takes men down takes the other men up. It takes about half an hour to get the men out. Some men have got to go down a quarter of an hour before the blowing of the whistle and some would not be down until a quarter of an hour after the whistle. The ones that go down a quarter of an hour before the whistle, come out a quarter of an hour before the whistle. We fix a different time for each level to go down.

M-37. *Miss Power* : How do you regulate the supply of men according to the work in hand ?—(*Mr. Hogan Taylor*) Up to the present it has not been necessary to take any steps to regulate that, because the incoming labour has generally been just equal to the outgoing labour, but now that conditions are changing they are coming in faster than they are being employed. We were going to start on the treatment of a large quantity of low grade ore, but owing to the depressed state of the metal market we have had to confine ourselves to the treatment of higher grade ore ; that has led to our employing a smaller number of men than we should have employed had we treated that low grade ore.

M-38. Is the difficulty you have sometimes experienced in finding employment for bodies of men who have travelled hundreds of miles to secure it, on the increase ?—No ; it seems to have reached a balanced condition at the moment. Very often Chinamen who go away are relieved by other members of their family, though that is not always the case.

M-33. Are your workers indebted to shopkeepers, money-lenders and others ?—(*Mr. Colquhoun*) I do not think any of our men are in debt to shopkeepers. The bulk of our people are free from debt. That is proved by the fact that last month Rs. 10,000 were sent away by our employees at two post offices ; there are only 1,200 or 1,400 men at those places.

M-40. *Mr. Clow* : People sometimes borrow money in order to send it away ?—They could not do it for very long.

M-41. *Miss Power* : Are there any women employed here ?—(*Mr. Hogan Taylor*) There are a few employed on belt picking who come within the Factories Act, and there are a few women employed on washing clothes in the Refinery Department.

M-42. Are the women employed on time-rates ?—They are paid daily rates of wages. (*Mr. Oberlander*) The women who are picking on the belts get As. 10 for 6 hours ; we work 6 hours so that they do not have to work after dark.

M-43. Are these women permanently employed ?—Yes.

M-44. Have you any system of maternity benefit for them when they are off work for childbirth ?—We have never seen the necessity for it. Their husbands also work in the smelter. In the normal way the cost of living of the Shan is very small. These people are practically all Shans. When I say they are permanent labour, I mean this : a girl comes to-day and she may send somebody in her place to-morrow ; we do not ask if it is the same girl or not.

M-45. *Mr. Tait*: With regard to the contract system Mr. Colquhoun mentioned the reasons for paying direct to the men, but I take it that that would not be practicable in the case of contracts of a permanent nature, for instance, removing earth from here to there or the building of a house?—(*Mr. Colquhoun*) In the case of building a house I let the contract to a Chinese contractor for a certain sum, and I do not know anything further.

M-46. It is impracticable to pay the men direct?—Yes.

M-47. Can you send us figures of the average monthly pay roll of your Indian labour and the average approximate remittances per month through the post-offices by Indians?

*The Chairman*: Do you include Gurkhas?

*Mr. Tait*: Yes. I understand that the average monthly pay roll of Indian labour is about 3 lakhs and the average remittances through the post-offices are about 2 lakhs which indicates that the men remit two-thirds of their earnings to their homes.

*The Chairman*: It seems a very large proportion. Perhaps you could furnish us figures?—(*Mr. Hogan Taylor*) Yes.

M-48. *Mr. Cliff*: If those figures were to be given would it be possible to know the proportion of Indians living here without their families?—That information I shall endeavour to obtain for you.

M-49. *The Chairman*: May not some of the remittances be those of the clerks and superior officers?—I should say that remittances would be made by people of all types representing all classes of employment.

M-50. *Mr. Tyabji*: May I suggest that it will be better to have the statistics asked for confined to the labour force, leaving out the staff, so that we can have a better idea of the money sent by labourers?

*The Chairman*: You cannot differentiate in the remittances.

M-51. *Mr. Tait*: It was mentioned that recruits are financed for the journey by their relatives on this side. I take it that that is more or less a surmise. All that one could assume is that these men who come over here finance themselves or obtain the money to cover the journey from their relatives at home or here?—We have no definite proof in the matter.

M-52. It is quite indefinite to state that the finance for the journey goes from this side?—As it does not go from the *maistries* we assume that they finance themselves. (*Mr. Colquhoun*) I think I can say definitely that the men are financed mostly from this place. For the first year of recruiting the journey expenses were met by us, and after that the men themselves sent money to Nepal and Almora and brought their friends. From that time we have the system of coolies coming of their own free will. I am quite sure that the money comes from this side because many have come to me and said "I have got my brother from home and have kept him with me for a week now, and I want you to give him some employment."

M-53. *Mr. Cliff*: If I am sending money to assist a friend to pay the cost of his travel will that be included in the post-office remittances?—I think it would be. If you look at the remittances through the post-office at

Bawdwin you will find that they are very high. I do not know off-hand the figures, but they are very high.

M-54. *Mr. Tait*: I take it that the fortnightly payment does entail a considerable increase in work?—(*Mr. Renou*) Practically it doubles our work.

M-55. *U Aye Maung*: May I know what is the total number of Burmese who were in the employ of the Corporation in 1920 and the total number now?—(*Mr. Oberlander*) The number now is 1,101. I have not got here the statistics for 1920, but I can give that later.

M-56. Does it include the clerical staff?—Yes.

M-57. Will you be able to give us the figures separately for the clerical staff and for the labour?—The number of Burmese who are employed in occupations that entail hard work is negligible because the Burman does not generally take to that type of work.

M-58. *The Chairman*: Does the figure given by you include the Shans?—No.

*U Aye Maung*: I want that the Shans should also be included with Burmans.

*The witness (Mr. Hogan Taylor)*: I think we can submit a statement showing the number of Burmans and Shans separately.

*The Chairman (to U Aye Maung)*: Will that do; also will it not be sufficient if we could get the figures for 1925 and 1930?

*U Aye Maung*: Yes, that will do.

*The witness (Mr. Hogan Taylor)*: We will not only give the actual number of Burmans and Shans but will also give their percentage proportion to the whole force.

M-59. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: In your mill and smelter where you have got the system of giving the work on contract to Chinese, the contractor I take it is responsible for the recruitment of his men?—(*Mr. Oberlander*) Yes.

M-60. Does he merely engage these Chinese locally or does he definitely recruit them from their homes?—The major portion is engaged locally. Large numbers of Chinese come here in the cold weather. They are mostly cultivators and do work here during the dry season.

M-61. He has not got to recruit them from their own homes?—If he at all brings them from their homes their number is relatively small.

M-62. Can you give the number of those who are given contract under this system?—In the mill the number is about 410 while in the smelter it is about 240.

M-63. With regard to your Stores I take it that the coolies themselves do not patronize it much and they purchase rice from the bazaar?—The Indian coolie does patronize it, but the Shans and others buy locally because they want only Shan unpolished rice.

M-64. Will the price that you charge for your rice affect the price of the Shan rice?—The price of the Shan rice is largely regulated by the size of the crop and the amount charged for the Indian rice.

M-65. What you really do is to keep down the price of the Indian rice?—Yes.

M-66. In the statement that has been furnished to us the word “retention” has been used. Will you explain what it exactly means?—(Mr. Colquhoun) The work of extracting the ore involves three operations, namely, breaking the ore, *i.e.*, drilling it and blasting it, timbering it and then filling the space with waste material. If we paid the contractor at the end of the month the full amount of the contract for doing the work of breaking the ore only, we would not be having any hold on the contractor for getting the work completed, that is, for getting the space filled with waste material. So we retain enough money out of the monthly contract earnings to pay for the completion of the stope. Another reason why we retain is that if they are paid all the money this month, say, for breaking the ore only they will get a very large amount this month while for doing the work of filling next month they will get very little.

M-67. It really comes to this that you retain a part of their wages until the completion of the contract?—It is not that we hold back a part of their wages till the completion of the contract. The work of breaking the ore and filling the space does not take place alternately. In some cases the space is not filled up for a year or two, and the retention is carried on.

M-68. The effect of your retention is that the amount that they draw month by month is more or less an even amount?—Yes.

M-69. Mr. Ahmed: In the booklet you have supplied to us you say: “The steps taken to bring about the present happy state of affairs were to send small expeditions both to China and to India in order to give publicity to the fact that a large programme of development was in progress and that there was a prospect of a large measure of employment.” When you say that you sent small expeditions, do you refer to the contractors?—No. We had some miners from the Kolar Gold Fields who were not found quite satisfactory in their work, but the Gurkhas we had here were good in their work. One of the Gurkhas told me that he could get good men, so I sent him back to his home and told him to recruit all the men that he could in Almora. That is where he went, and we paid all his expenses. Previous to this we sent out some Europeans to China to recruit the Chinese, but we had to stop this because it was not found satisfactory. The Chinese only worked during the cold season, until March or April, and at one time this crippled me. From that time we concentrated on men from India, and the number of Chinese has consequently decreased now. Once we had about 75 per cent. Chinamen and 25 per cent. Indians, but now 68 per cent. of our force are Gurkhas.

M-70. Of the labour population you mean?—Yes, in the mines department at Bawdwin.

M-71. It is correct to say, is it not, that a number of contractors were sent out to India to give publicity to your large programme of work and to bring labourers here?—Yes.

M-72. When you told Sir Alexander Murray that you asked the contractors to bring men at the rate of Rs. 1-4-0 you were referring to these contractors whom you sent out to India for giving publicity to your work?—(*Mr. Hogan Taylor*) I think there is some confusion. When Mr. Colquhoun spoke about the contractors bringing men at the rate of Rs. 1-4-0 he was speaking of men being engaged at Rs. 1-4-0 for stopping operations from amongst those whom he already had on hand at the mines.

M-73. *The Chairman*: What exactly was the period in which you had to send recruiters to India that you refer to here? For how long did it last?—(*Mr. Colquhoun*) It lasted for less than a year.

M-74. After that you had all the labour coming of its own accord?—Yes.

M-75. It was only during one year that you sent out recruiters?—Yes.

M-76. *Mr. Ahmed*: When was that?—Some few years ago; I cannot tell you off-hand.

*Sir Alexander Murray*: It is given in the booklet. "These expeditions took place in the period 1922-24."

M-77. *Mr. Ahmed*: In reply to Sir Alexander Murray you said that if a worker leaves his work and comes back to you for a second time you pay him to start with 2 as. less than what he was drawing before he left the work, but that after some time if the foreman recommends he is given that 2 as. What foreman were you referring to?—The foreman in the mine. We have shift bosses and assistant foremen. We have 76 Europeans for supervision.

M-78. There are some among these who supervise the work of the workers?—Yes. In the underground the man in charge of the mine, who is a technical man, is the foreman. Beneath him is the assistant foreman who is in charge of a certain section of the mine. Beneath that man is the level boss.

M-79. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: Are all these men Europeans?—Yes. Beneath the level bosses we have Anglo-Indians who are assistant shift bosses and take charge of certain stopes or certain portions under the level bosses. Beneath them we have supervisors who are all Indians, and then comes the actual workers, *i.e.*, the contractor of the stope with his 5 men in each shift.

M-80. *The Chairman*: You are using the word 'contractor' which is well known in India, and you have described in this paper that the contractors are leaders of groups of 5. Is it wise to call them contractors?—I think we should cut out that word.

M-81. *Mr. Ahmed*: The leader of the group makes 10 per cent. profit out of the gross earnings of the group?—No. He gets 10 per cent. of the bonus; otherwise the earnings are equally divided amongst the 5.

*The Chairman*: He is a working group leader.

*Sir Alexander Murray*: The system of working is clearly explained in the paper that has been supplied to us by the Corporation.

M-82. *Mr. Ahmed*: You give the work of road making to the contractors who engage a number of labourers to do the work?—Yes.

M-83. Do you give any other work on contract?—Cutting fuel in the jungle. But nothing in the mine.

M-84. What else ?—Framing timbers on the surface.

M-85. Anything more ?—Nothing else that I know of.

M-86. I suppose you know that the labourers who are engaged by these contractors are always paid at a lower rate than the rate that the contractors get from you ?—Not necessarily.

M-87. But the contractor makes his income out of this work ?—Yes, generally.

M-88. *Mr. Cliff*: Do you take a regular census of the total population of the lease ?—(*Mr. Hogan Taylor*) No; we have no accurate census at the present time, but in conjunction with the Government that work will have to be undertaken now.

M-89. *Mr. Clow*: That is the ordinary census ?—Yes.

M-90. *Mr. Cliff*: Does that mean that the Corporation has no record of people resident in its area at any given time ?—No. We have got record only of our employees.

M-91. If a person comes seeking employment does he register at the office; or what is the procedure ?—(*Mr. Renou*) If he applies to me I register him, but he has the option of going direct to the head of the department and getting employed. He then brings me down an engagement chit from the head of the department and I register him and give him a card and allot a house to him and away he goes to his work.

M-92. Have you got a current record of the number of applicants who have registered for work ?—A number of them do not take the trouble of registering; they often hear from their friends or relatives that a job is ready in some department and they go direct to the head of the department and get engaged by him.

M-93. Are there very many registered applicants ?—Not very many.

M-94. Is it possible that there are a large number of people who are non-workers on this lease ?—No, it is not. There is a Housing Inspector who keeps a check over the buildings belonging to the Corporation.

M-95. Is there any record showing the number of people on the lease including men, women and children ?—We have not got a census of the population living at present on the lease, but we have a list of buildings belonging to the lease which we have allotted to the different employees; and they occupy them with their wives and children. We do not keep a list of the women and children on the lease. If any employee wants his wife's sister or his brother or any one of his relations to come and live with him during a short visit or pending engagement at the works, he applies to the Housing Inspector who grants the necessary permission.

M-96. But you have no record to show the total population resident on the lease ?—No.

M-97. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: Have you no record of the number of such relations who ask for permission to live on the lease pending engagement at the works ?—No, there is no record. It is practically asking for permission to live there for the time being.

M-98. *Colonel Russell* : You must have had a census of the population here in 1921 and a record of the number of workers on the lease. Those figures will help you to give us an idea of the relation between the working population and the total population resident on the lease ?—(*Mr. Hogan Taylor*) Yes.

M-99. *Mr. Cliff* : Has the position here changed out of all recognition since 1921 ?—I was not here in 1921 ; I could not say.

M-100. What is the number of dismissals that has taken place during the last two years ; do you dismiss many men ?—(*Mr. Oberlander*) No, we dismiss very few. (*Mr. Hogan Taylor*) Men have been dismissed for inefficiency or disobedience, but their number is negligible.

M-101. What is the total number of people in the provident fund whose monthly income does not exceed Rs. 300 ?—(*Mr. Sharpe*) Approximately 1,661.

M-102. On what principle do you allot quarters to the workers on your lease ?—(*Mr. Renou*) Clerks getting Rs. 75 a month and over get two rooms each ; if they have large families they get three rooms. Supervisors living with their wives and children get a special room. All married workers get special rooms. Unmarried workers get accommodation on the basis of 300 c. ft. for each individual. For instance, a room 10' × 12' × 10' will accommodate 4 single men.

M-103. Do you allot the quarters separately for the various communities ?—Yes, we do that very strictly. For instance, we have Muhammadan barracks, Gurkha barracks, Punjabi barracks and so on. We keep the different people in different barracks.

M-104. In your memorandum you quote an address presented by your employees to His Excellency Sir Charles Innes wherein they have said that they have " no grievances to recite and no cause to represent." Arising out of that may I ask what opportunity is afforded to the workpeople to make collective representations on matters connected with their employment ?—(*Mr. Hogan Taylor*) They can first approach the head of the department and then the General Manager at any time.

M-105. When was the last collective representation made ?—There has been no collective representation in my time.

M-106. Does that mean that the workpeople on this lease have had no occasion to make a collective representation on matters arising out of their employment ?—They have not made any till now and I am not aware of any ground existing for making any representation. I have certain semi-judicial duties to perform here and in that connection I am moving among the people to a considerable extent and I may say confidently that there is no cause for them to make a collective representation. If there was any, I have not seen it and they have also failed to express it.

M-107. Have there been any individual representations and what has been their character ?—Occasionally a man will come to me with a petition written by a petition-writer saying that he has been unjustly dismissed and praying that he may be reinstated. But when the matter is investigated it is always

found that the man has no cause of complaint and that he has been justly dismissed.

M-108. Has he got any one to assist him in making representations ?—An interpreter from my office is always called in to assist him.

M-109. In that same address to His Excellency Sir Charles Innes to which I referred there is a statement about the "peace and harmony of these people—a peace uninterrupted by party factions and unimpaired by political agitations." Suppose a workman on your lease sought to secure an association of the workpeople here, would he be regarded as an agitator ?—Everybody on the lease has got the freedom to express his opinion. But I should say that we would not welcome any trade union or political organization on the lease, only because it is not necessary. We have built up a sort of a patriarchal system here and we are convinced that it is far more to the interests of the workers and the industry generally than a system where there are trade unions and political organizations.

M-110. Does that mean that the Corporation is absolute ?—No ; but many years' experience of dealing with the people, working for them, and the knowledge of the conditions prevailing in industries elsewhere have proved to the Corporation that the method they are adopting is a satisfactory one.

M-111. I am not questioning the intention or the good will of the Corporation. I am only seeking to discover whether it is the policy of the Corporation that its will should prevail ?—It is not the will of the Corporation, but it is the wish of the Corporation that there should not be any outside organization coming in between the management and the workers.

M-112. Are there any regular rest days at the Mill ?—There is no scheduled rest day at the Mill, but there are always 12½ per cent. of the registered workers at the Mill absent.

M-113. Is there a scheduled rest day at the Mines ?—No, but the work in the Mines is so arranged that there is no work on Sundays.

M-114. Do you pay people any allowances during times of sickness ?—If a man is an in-patient in the hospital on account of malaria we give him half pay.

M-115. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : Only on account of malaria ?—What do you do in the case of accidents ?—In the case of accidents they come under the Workmen's Compensation Act.

M-116. *Colonel Russell* : I understand that sometime ago you had considerable trouble with cases of lead poisoning. What did you do to reduce your cases to the great extent that you have done ?—Three years ago we initiated a system which has gradually evolved until to-day every man seeking employment at the smelters or the refinery is first examined by the Chief Medical Officer who makes a record of his various characteristics. The man works for three months and at the end of that period the Medical Officer examines him again for lead intoxication and so on. If the man is found to be suffering from lead intoxication he is sent away ; if he is not, he is allowed to work for another three months and examined once again. Lately we have extended the period to six months. In this way as a result of constant examination

we get early indication of the susceptibilities of the various people to lead poisoning. It is found that some people are more susceptible to lead poisoning than others. All this is done in addition to certain facilities which we provide in order to avoid lead poisoning, such as wash basins to wash their hands before eating their food and separate places away from the work to eat food. By these means we have been able to exclude people who are susceptible to lead poisoning.

M-117. With regard to the general health control of the area under the Corporation I understand that there are one or two villages such as Panghai, where your control is not complete?—That village is really under Government control and they employ their own officers.

M-118. Take malaria, which is a source of great trouble to you. How do you manage to get anti-malarial work done in these villages?—(Dr. Hamilton): We have tried to do anti-malarial work in those areas as much as we could. Our malaria inspector visits those places and does what he can. There is an Assistant Superintendent here, the representative of Government. He buys the oiling machines, we supply the oil to him and he does the oiling with his men.

M-119. Does the Government give any grants to the Corporation for its anti-malarial work?—(Mr. Hogan Taylor) Government does not give any grant for anti-malarial work; it gives a grant of Rs. 20,000 a year to provide medical and surgical attention to the people other than those employed under the Corporation.

M-120. Mr. Tyabji : Dealing with accidents the report of the Chief Inspector of Mines for 1928 shows that your figures for "Underground" are 1.10 per thousand workers as against 1.64 for all-India, for serious accidents 15.90 per 1,000 workers as against 6.30 for all-India. For open workings the figures are : death—nil, serious accidents—16.66 as compared to the all-India figure of 0.92. For surface workings the figures are : death—nil, fatal accidents—nil, and serious accidents—11.27 as compared to the all-India figure of 2.60. Do not these figures show that the incidence of accidents in your case is higher than for all-India? Could you explain why?—It may not be so if you compare other years. It may even show that the incidence of accidents here is much lower than the all-India figure.

M-121. The Chairman : Has the Mines Inspector complained about the incidence of accidents?—Speaking from memory I may say that the Mines Inspector has always given us to understand both orally and otherwise that the steps taken by the Corporation to minimize accidents are exceptionally good.

M-122. Mr. Tait : The all-India figures include open workings also and therefore the comparison is not a proper one?—Yes. There is no mine in India of a similar nature to Bawdwin, and any comparison with all-India figures would be unsatisfactory for that reason.

M-123. Mr. Tyabji : The Tatas have open iron ore workings. Would not that therefore be a proper comparison?—But we have very few men employed on open workings, whereas the Tatas have many thousands on their open workings.

M-124. Would it be possible for you to let us have some figure for 1929?—The 1929 report has not yet been received. The 1928 report is the last report received.

M-125. *The Chairman*: When do you send in your return to the Chief Inspector?—We do it in March of the year following the year for which the statistics are compiled.

M-126. Would you let us have a copy of your last return to the Mines Department?—(*Mr. Colquhoun*). There was only one fatal accident last year. (*Mr. Hogan Taylor*). We will try to let the Commission have the figures before it leaves Namtu. If not, we will send it on to you.

M-127. *Mr. Tyabji*: How many times in a year does the Chief Inspector of Mines come to visit your mines?—The Chief Inspector of Mines or one of his deputies visits us at least twice a year.

M-128. Coming back to the question of the incidence of accidents, I do not remember to have seen any figures of employment under factories as such. I think the figure has been asked for?—Yes. We have to segregate the labour force under certain heads and give the number as those who are employed under the Factories Act.

M-129. *The Chairman*: Which parts of the works are inspected by the Factory Inspector?—The smelter, the refinery, the mill, the machine shops, the engineering shops and the saw mill.

M-130. *Mr. Tyabji*: I find from the Report of the Chief Inspector of Factories that your incidence of accidents in the factories under certain headings is rather high. For instance, under "Struck by falling body or injured when handling goods" there were 157 cases, or 40·82 for 1,000 workers as the total number of workers working under the Factories Act was 3,837. What is that due to?—I cannot say exactly what the cases are due to, but I do know this that we make a careful report of all accidents that occur, even though they are of the most trivial nature.

M-131. What type of cases would you have in the factories which give you 157 cases under "Struck by falling body or injured when handling goods"?—We are under some little disadvantage in answering the question inasmuch as the gentleman who prepares the returns, our Chief Accountant, has lately retired from our employment, and his successor has only been in charge for a few months. He did not prepare the last lot of returns; so it is no good asking him for that information.—(*Mr. Oberlander*) There are cases where, for instance, in the case of men riveting a plate, the man working above may drop a bolt on the man below or something else of that kind. In unloading ore, the men working down below may have some ore spilled on them from above. All these are minor accidents. We record every accident that occurs where the man receives medical assistance. If he has a little cut and receives medical assistance, we call it an accident.

M-132. *The Chairman*: Has the Chief Inspector of Factories made any complaint as to the number of accidents?—I cannot say off-hand, but I do not remember that he has made any complaints during the last few years.

M-133. *Mr. Tyabji*: Under "Molten and hot lead and corrosive liquids" there are 99 accidents. That comes to 24·74 per 1,000. Why is the number

so large?—If a man gets spilled with a little bit of lead which necessitates his being off duty for two or three days, we report that as an accident. An American boy, if he had such a little accident, would not stay off work.

M-134. It is 157 cases a year; that is 5 accidents per day. Why should it be so large?—The number of accidents from molten lead is very small indeed. There may be a small splash of lead and there is a burn; we report it as an accident. The man does not need to leave off work at all. If he goes to the dispensary for treatment, we report it as an accident.

M-135. *The Chairman*: Will you give us the number of attachments of wages under an order of the court? (*Mr. Sharpe*) The current number of is 30 attachments.

M-136. Attachments of wages for debts due presumably to money-lenders?—(*Mr. Hogan Taylor*) Possibly a number of those are for debts due to money-lenders. (*Mr. Oberlander*) They are not local debts. In a number of cases, they are debts incurred by the man before he came here. He is sued in the local court, and his creditor obtains an attachment for the collection of the money that may have been due to him.

M-137. An attachment by a court in an Indian town, say in Bihar and Orissa, would follow him here?—Not Bihar and Orissa, but in the province of Burma.

M-138. Do you think it is a sound system that employers should be made debt collectors?—I think it is a very unsound system. I think for the company to be made debt collectors for money-lenders or other people who have allowed the man to contract debt is wholly wrong in principle.

M-139. *Mr. Ahmed*: You have said that a number of money orders are despatched from here. May it not be that the money is sent to the man from whom the worker has borrowed in order to cover the cost of his travelling to this place? It may also be that he was indebted there in his native town, and that is the reason why he has been obliged to come such a long distance to work and send some money to the money-lender from whom he has borrowed?—(*Mr. Hogan Taylor*) I cannot say where they send the money.

M-140. Yesterday I was questioning some of the workers here who come from Bengal and Balasore district in Bihar and Orissa. They said that they are heavily indebted in their native places, and the cost of living here has increased to such an extent that they have to spend R. 15 to Rs. 20 a month for food and clothing, leaving them very little margin to repay their debts. As they cannot save much, getting rid of their debts is a hard job. That is the reason why I am putting it to you that the money sent through the post office may be for that purpose?—In part it might be so.

M-141. You are not in a position to say anything about it?—No.

M-142. *The Chairman*: We have been informed in some cases in Burma that the provident fund money can be attached by an order of the court. Yesterday I understood that here that is not the case. Could any one explain how it is that the provident fund in this case is free from attachment?—That is an old decision of the management that the provident fund cannot be attached by a court. (*Mr. Oberlander*) That is the constitution of the fund. It is

impossible for the employee to transfer his interest in the fund. Whenever there has been an attachment, we have refused to acknowledge it.

M-143. That is not due to any particular difference between your provident fund and any others that you know of?—I do not think so.

M-144. I was not aware that a rule in your constitution could be set up as against the order of the court. I must ask the local Government as to exactly what the law is. (*Mr. Oberlander*) Apparently it is the usual thing not to permit any attachment to operate against the provident fund.

M-145. We have had it from you that attempts have been made to attach the provident fund moneys, and you have resisted them; you have refused to acknowledge them?—Yes.

M-146. *Mr. Tyabji*: What is your general system of working the Workmen's Compensation Act? For instance, who is the Commissioner for compensation, and how is the whole system worked? (*Mr. Hogan Taylor*) I may say that the Commissioner for compensation here is the Assistant Superintendent; he is a representative of the Federated Shan States; he belongs to the Burma Frontier Service; he is virtually an official of the Government.

M-147. *The Chairman*: Where does he reside?—In Namtu.

M-148. *Mr. Tya'ji*: Do all the cases which come up with regard to compensation go to him direct?—The payment of small sums as compensation for a few days covering the time the man is out of work is made direct to the workman. In the case of fatal accidents, it is done through the Commissioner.

M-149. Have you had any cases where the arrangement has not been satisfactory, and you have received any notice from Rangoon lawyers, and you have then paid up the amount claimed by the worker?—(*Mr. Oberlander*) I understand that there has been a case at the mine where a lawyer from Rangoon has come up here in connection with the case, but on the case coming up before the Commissioner it has been decided in the Company's favour.

M-150. Was there any case with regard to any railway worker whose case went up to Rangoon?—(*Mr. McDonough*) I do not remember any such case under the Workmen's Compensation Act.

(The witnesses withdrew.)

**BURMA.**

**Second Meeting.**

**YENANGYAUNG.**

*Monday, 27th October 1930.*

**PRESENT :**

The Rt. Hon'ble J. H. WHITLEY (*Chairman*).

Sir VICTOR SASSOON, Bart.

Mr. G. D. BIRLA.

Sir ALEXANDER MURRAY, KT., C.B.E.

Mr. JOHN CLIFF.

Mr. A. G. CLOW, C.I.E., I.C.S.

Miss B. M. LE POER POWER.

Mr. KABIR-UD-DIN AHMED, Bar.-at-Law.

Lt.-Col. A. J. H. RUSSELL, C.B.E.,  
I.M.S. (*Medical Assessor*).

Mr. J. TAIT.

U. AYE MAUNG.

Mr. S. A. S. TYABJI.

U HLA BU.

} *Assistant Commissioners.*

Mr. S. LALL, I.C.S.

Mr. A. DIBDIN.

} *Joint Secretaries.*

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**Mr. J. WEBSTER, Labour Superintendent, Burmah Oil Company, Yenangyaung.**

M-151. *The Chairman* : What are your duties ? Besides being Labour Superintendent at Yenangyaung, I am responsible for the labour bureau at Singu, and the whole of the B. O. C. labour up country is under my control. There is also a Labour Superintendent at Singu ; I am in a supervisory capacity as far as he is concerned. The minor fields to the north of Singu come under the Singu bureau, the engagement of the men being made on the minor field itself and recorded at the Singu bureau. The same thing happens with regard to the minor fields to the south of Yenangyaung which come under Yenangyaung. This office opened in January 1924, and the Singu office in the middle of 1925.

M-152. In 1923 there was a strike of considerable duration on these oil fields ?—Yes, it started in the beginning of March and lingered on till July.

M-153. The first claim of the strikers, as is only natural, was for an increase in wages ?—Yes.

M-154. The second claim, if I remember rightly, was for the institution of a labour bureau as it was claimed that it would be a means of abolishing favouritism and bribery which was said to have taken place on engagements and promotions prior to that time ?—Yes ; I am not certain that the actual wording is correct, but they certainly asked for an institution to control en-

gagements and discharges of workmen which would eliminate bribery and corruption.

M-155. And after that this labour bureau was instituted ?—Yes.

M-156. At what period subsequent to then did you come here ?—I was actually the agent of a small oil company in 1923 ; the labourers of all the companies, with the exception of this small oil company, were on strike. I do not know why, but I was asked to join the B. O. C. and start this labour organization in July 1923. I was first asked to make recommendations ; those recommendations were accepted and the office on the lines I suggested was opened on 1st January, 1924.

M-157. Does the whole of the human side of the life of the workers here come within your purview, that is to say, all their interests except the actual technical work ?—That is correct. When they first arrive on the field they come to this office to be sent to the finger print bureau and for photographing, after which we register them for employment ; they are selected by this office to fill vacancies, engaged and housed ; we deal with their grievances whilst working, their short pay complaints, their petty disputes with their fellow workmen either at work or in their barracks ; we listen to appeals against discharge—all discharges pass through us ; we try to settle all claims and grievances ; then there is compensation in case of accidents and sometimes disputes between man and wife. In addition we supervise all company housing, run the profit sharing Stores and the schools.

M-158. The establishment and conduct of the schools is also under your direction ?—Yes, entirely. In addition we recommend the Company to give financial assistance for the building of temples ; in one case we built a mosque ; we provide electric light to a large number of pagodas and water for village tanks ; all that comes under this office.

M-159. How do your duties with regard to health fit in with those of the medical officers ?—They rather overlap. Workmen come here first for treatment for venereal disease and are sent by us with a chit to the doctor for treatment. Sick men frequently come here first and are sent down to the doctor for treatment though they can go direct.

M-160. *Col. Russell* : Is there a medical inspection when they are recruited ?—Yes, now there is ; at one time it was only skilled labour and clerks who were medically inspected before engagement, but since 1st March 1930, we have extended it to unskilled labour.

M-161. How do you work with the medical staff with regard to sanitation ?—Only as critics ; sanitation is the duty of the medical department ; we criticize and recommend.

M-162. *The Chairman* : Have you any figures showing the effect of the 6 years' work of your department in minimizing grievances with regard to unjust dismissal, unfair promotion, favouritism and that sort of thing ?—No. I can show you a sample of the cases which are dealt with month by month and I can give you figures showing the reduction in the number of discharges at Khodaung over the last 6 years. This has been taken out quarterly since 1923 showing the numbers of men engaged and discharged. In the first

quarter of 1923, which is not a fair quarter owing to there being a strike, the figures were as follows :—

<i>Year.</i>	<i>Engagements.</i>	<i>Discharges.</i>	<i>Total Pay roll.</i>
1923 first quarter ..	3,238	2,862	6,700
1924 first quarter ..	1,503	1,818	7,350
1930 first quarter ..	1,598	1,438	10,197
1930 second quarter ..	1,328	1,379	10,295

M-163. Will you give us the percentage of dismissals to persons employed ?  
—I will have that worked out.

M-164. What has been the effect of the establishment of your labour bureau on grievances with regard to employment, promotion and dismissal ?—The effect is that the grievances brought forward have generally changed in tone. At one time they were with regard to unjust discharges, assault by supervisors and oppression generally. Now they are more with regard to short pay owing to mistakes, and they are generally more petty.

M-165. Has the fact that all engagements and discharges must come through your hands had an effect in bringing about more fair dealing generally throughout the works ?—I think so. It has also had the effect of making men value their jobs more. At one time, when each department engaged its own men independently, a man disagreeing with his *maistry* or supervisor would resign or he might be dismissed for some trivial fault. He would not worry because he could easily get another job in some other department. Accordingly men did not value their jobs so much that they do now, with the result that many men would move from department to department two or three times inside a year. This and the general "don't care" attitude led to a large number of discharges from the pay roll. Now men wishing to move from one department to another department are transferred without their names being struck off the wages books.

M-166. Has your work had the effect of sweeping away the bribery of superiors to obtain jobs ?—I think it has had the effect of sweeping away bribery in engaging men. From time to time one hears complaints of bribery even in one's own office in order that one man may obtain preference over another. I have never been able to obtain any tangible proof of it, and I have considerable doubts about it. The final selection of any workman is made either by me or Mr. Higginbotham or another European ; the clerks merely keep the registers. A clerk at Singu was detected manipulating the registers and was discharged. We do not say there is no such thing as bribery here because he would be a very bold man who could say that, but to the best of our knowledge and belief bribery is kept well under control, and if detected is punished by dismissal. I am of opinion that there is still a certain amount of corruption in the fields among men holding jobs and their immediate supervisors ; when a clerk or supervisor finds that a man has committed some fault for which, if it were reported to a European, the man would be fined or discharged, the man is prepared to bribe the supervisor to conceal his fault ; I think that goes on to some extent.

M-167. Do you have any complaints now from workmen that they have to make payments to their superiors?—Not until after they are discharged; one never hears a complaint of that nature from a man whilst he is in employment; if it occurs it is invariably when the man is appealing against his discharge, and he is seldom in a position to produce evidence; it is just one man's word against another.

M-168. What is the extent of indebtedness among your workmen?—The indebtedness as we knew it when the memorandum was written was not very large; our Indian employees, to the best of our knowledge, send considerable sums of money home every month. Our Burman employees have debts but they are for quite small amounts.

M-169. Have you any attachments by the court on wages or salaries for debt?—Yes, a fair amount; there used to be more than there are now. The Company made a rule that if any man's pay was attached, he would be discharged from the Company's employment. That had the effect of reducing the number of these attachments. These attachments were invariably made on behalf of people of the money-lender type, and after this rule came into effect I heard of cases where the men were able to compound with the money-lender.

M-170. Can you give us the number of attachments at present on the total pay roll?—I can tell you the number of cases in which orders of attachment of pay have been received and have involved the man's discharge.

M-171. I suppose your company would be in favour of a general prohibition of attachment of wages for debt?—I cannot definitely answer for the Company, but I have every reason to believe they would be quite glad to see a prohibition of attachment of wages for debt; personally I should be very pleased.

M-172. Do you allow any money-lenders on your premises?—No, we do everything we can to discourage them, but they usually manage to get round the pay offices on pay days. Sometimes the police have taken action against them because they are inside the prohibited area without finger print cards, but that is all that has been done.

M-173. I understand you have a system of recognized leave?—There is a system whereby a man earning Rs. 34 or more per month after 3 years' service with the Company can get 4 months' leave without pay with a lien on the job when he returns; he is guaranteed the same job if he returns inside 4 months, but if he has urgent business and sends a telegram asking that the leave be extended, it invariably is.

M-174. Why is it limited to men earning Rs. 34 or more?—Because it is intended to include only skilled men who start on Rs. 34 a month. The ordinary labourer's pay is Re. 1-0-8 per day or Rs. 27 a month.

M-175. What does the ordinary labourer do when he goes to his own country?—He has to leave his job; if he is an unskilled man, returning after a long absence from the oil fields, he is treated as a new comer when he comes back.

M-176. Do these unskilled men come back over a series of years?—Yes, their absence varies considerably, from 9 months to 2 years.

M-177. I understand that until the beginning of this year you gave pensions for long service?—No, there is no published pension scheme or any scheme that has been circulated among the workers. It has been our practice to make monthly payments to certain workmen whom we call “aged retainers” men who have an unbroken service with the Company of over 25 years. There are 64 such on the Khodaung. Side by side with this payment of “pensions” is the junior Provident Fund. About 5 years ago the Junior Provident Fund was opened to all workmen earning Rs. 1-2-6 a day, *i.e.*, Rs. 30 a month or more. To the best of my knowledge it is the hope of the Company that the Junior Provident Fund shall take the place of and reduce the necessity for the grant of more “pensions”. The Junior Provident Fund is open to men earning from Rs. 30 to Rs. 200 a month; a man earning over Rs. 200 a month is eligible to become a member of the Senior Provident Fund which is the same provident fund as we belong to.

M-178. Is there any desire on the part of those earning less than Rs. 30 a month to participate in a provident fund?—No; if there were, we should be prepared to consider their admission but no desire has been voiced here.

M-179. Is the point that their work is too irregular to make it worth their while?—No, the point is that there is little willingness to join. The majority of our people earning under Rs. 30 a month are Indians and there are very few Indian workers who are members of the provident fund.

M-180. The method of saving which they prefer is to send money back to their families?—Yes, it seems so.

M-181. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: What is the difference between the Junior and Senior Provident Funds?—In the Junior Provident Fund the man contributes one month's pay in a year, the Company adds a month's pay, and 5 per cent. interest is given. In the Senior Provident Fund the man contributes 5 per cent. of his pay every month, to which the Company adds another 5 per cent.; in addition, when the dividend is declared the man gets the same percentage of his year's pay as the dividend less the 5 per cent. already given.

M-182. *Miss Power*: What is the history of the Company with regard to recruitment of labour?—I have no knowledge of the history of it. I have been in the oil fields 10 years and during that time, except during a brief period in the 1923 strike, there has been no recruitment. During the 1923 strike I think a few Indians were recruited from Rangoon as strike-breakers. The policy until quite recently was that any man arriving in the oil fields went to the finger print bureau where he was given a finger print card which entitled him to apply for work in the oil fields. With the finger print card he came here and registered for work. There was no control on the numbers. The cost of the upkeep of the Finger Print Bureau is paid by the Oil Fields Services Committee the funds of which are provided by the Oil Companies. Complaint was made of the expense of the finger printing and it was decided to try and reduce the finger printing of a number of undesirable people who were not likely to get employment. An arrangement was then made whereby certain companies were given a quota: they could recommend daily up to a certain number of men to be finger printed. Men come here and apply

for finger print cards and are interviewed and selected either by Mr. Higginbotham or myself; if they are physically unfit, or if they are small children or old men, we do not have them finger printed; but if they are men who are likely to be of use, they are sent down to the Finger Print Bureau to be photographed. There is no guarantee of employment implied in their being photographed and finger printed.

M-183. Are there appreciably more people coming now than formerly?—No, there are less; the actual number of people finger printed has decreased considerably. The newcomers who are coming are far in excess of the number we can employ. I have figures which show that out of 700 men finger printed in the months of April, May and June, about 249 have been engaged by October 23rd, so that in those three months only there were 500 more men than were needed arrived at the oil fields. We eliminate small boys, old men and men physically unfit for work on the oil fields.

M-184. *The Chairman*: You have no other method of stopping the flow?—No. When an Indian arrives in Rangoon, if there is a job in Rangoon, he will take it; if there is a chance of getting a job in Bassein or Mandalay he will go there; if he has a brother or relation employed in the oil fields the man will sooner or later drift here and probably remain here. His theory is that if he is to be unemployed anyhow, he is better living with his relative than remaining unemployed in, say, Rangoon where he is probably incurring debt, and whilst here there is always the hope that ultimately his name will come to the top of the register.

M-185. *Miss Power*: You do not do any form of propoganda to stop these people for whom you have no work from coming?—No. We thought that the thing would stop of its own accord when people came to understand that there was little chance of employment at the oil fields, but we find that it has not.

M-186. *Mr. Clow*: Would it not be better if you only registered those for whom you had jobs?—It could be done, but it has not been done til now. We have refused to register old men, children and unsuitable men but we have not refused to register able-bodied men.

M-187. *Miss Power*: You do not put men on short time in order to take on more men?—We have never done that. We have done everything to stabilise employment and to ensure men a full month's work. Owing to the similarity of work in different departments we have been able, in the case of unskilled labour, to group the men into a general labour pool. Requisitions from different departments are received daily and are supplied from the men in this pool. Some departments have considerable fluctuations in the amount of unskilled labour they require. By classifying requisitions according to the urgency of the work for which unskilled labour is required we have been able to keep the strength of the pool to the number of men we normally need and thereby give all a full month's work. This system of pooling avoids the necessity for continual reduction of staff on one side and continual re-engagements on the other as the volume of work moves from department to department. Recently the use of modern labour saving appliances has reduced the demand for unskilled labour. As an instance, the Transport Department a few months ago brought into use a mobile crane and this crane has cut

down their daily requisitions for unskilled labour by four gangs or 68 men. We are not sure if this crane will be a success or not ; we may yet need these four gangs ; meantime they are being employed on other work and thereby some gangs may have been idle during the past two months for one or two days at the outside in August and September. On no account do we wish to lose a good gang.

M-188. In your memorandum you say that skilled labour stays in many cases for many years, while generally unskilled labour is migratory. Have you done anything to encourage it to become less migratory ?—Apart from the improvement in general conditions and reduction in men discharged we have done nothing. We wish it were less migratory.

M-189. What do the workers' councils do and how are they constituted ?—After the strike in 1926 we started these workers councils in order to give the workmen an opportunity of making representations and also in order that the management may come into closer touch with the workmen. The councils were first selected by me ; they were not elected. I selected them from workmen who were neither extremists nor pro-Company men. They worked well for two years and put forward many useful suggestions. The management acted upon some of the suggestions, while they were not able to act upon others such as those asking for large increase in pay and so on. This year we have an elected council. Elections were held at the beginning of the year and the elected council is now working.

M-190. Why have you divided these councils on racial lines into Burman and Indian ?—It is difficult for these two sets of workers to agree. They have very few things in common. One class mainly resides with their families and their suggestions almost always have a bearing on family life, while the other class is migratory and their suggestions are almost always personal. There is also the difficulty of the many vernaculars used.

M-191. *The Chairman* : Could you let us have the minutes of two or three typical meetings of the workers, councils of the Indian and Burman workers separately ?—Yes.

M-192. *Miss Power* : You house only 53 per cent. of your labourers' Is there any scheme to house all the labourers of your Company ?—At the present moment we have some Indian bachelor houses vacant and we have no more demand for them. There is need for more Burman family houses and we are building them. In the beginning Burmans had a suspicion that the Company would charge rents once the men had occupied Company houses, but the suspicion has now gone and the demand for Burman family houses is increasing. We are gradually building such houses to meet the demand.

M-193. Do you house your contractor's labour or in any way supervise their housing ?—In some cases we house them, but mostly they live in sheds put up by the contractors.

M-194. *Mr. Tait* : When you preside over the workers' councils as Labour Superintendent, do you in any way influence the subject matter of discussion ?—No. They have absolute freedom of discussion. For instance, when a question for increase of pay for certain employees of the

Company comes up for discussion, even though I feel that it is not a justifiable demand or that the Company cannot afford to pay, it is recorded in the minutes that so and so made a request that certain people should be paid higher rates of pay and so on.

M-195. With regard to unemployment, I take it that the chief cause is that the higher wages you pay attracts a large number of men for whom you have no work ; therefore, if the wages in the oil fields were reduced to the same level as in other industries, the number of people seeking employment in the oil fields would be reduced. Would that not be one way of reducing unemployment in the oil fields ?—Yes. One method of reducing unemployment here would be to reduce the attractions of the oil fields.

M-196. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : It would not reduce the total unemployment ; it would only reduce the number of people who came over here ?—Yes.

M-197. *Mr. Tait* : What percentage of the labour force is eligible for the Junior Provident Fund?—On the Khodaung Field there are 3,748 men earning less than Rs. 30 a month and 5,528 men earning more than Rs. 30 a month and therefore eligible to join the fund.

M-198. *Mr. Birla* : You said just now that the higher wages paid on the oil fields attracted a large number of people here thereby causing some unemployment. How do you compare the wages paid on the oil fields with the wages paid in other places such as Rangoon, etc. ?—I gather that on an average an unskilled labourer gets about annas 12 to annas 14 a day in Rangoon whereas the minimum wage here is Re. 1-0-8.

M-199. Have you any figures to compare the monthly earnings of an unskilled labourer working here with one working in Rangoon ? You will agree that whatever the daily rates of wages be, the monthly earnings depend on the number of days for which one gets work. The point is whether an unskilled labourer here is able to get work for a full month, *i.e.*, for 25 or 26 days in a month ?—The unskilled labourers on the oil fields are able to get work for 25 or 26 days a month. To the best of my knowledge more than 95 per cent. of our employees work a full month. They are on daily rates of pay, but they are paid monthly. Normally all are required to work a full month.

M-200. What becomes of those who are unemployed here ? Have they just to wait for some time and then go away ?—There are other companies here and local contractors. They get work with them occasionally, though in such cases they may not get a full month's work.

M-201. I do not understand how, unless a man gets continuous work for 25 or 26 days a month and earns Rs. 25 or Rs. 26 per month, there could be any attraction for him on the oil fields ?—The attraction is that if the man once gets work in the Burmah Oil Company he gets work for a full month and he goes on getting it so long as he is efficient.

M-202. This means that although people know that work is not easily available on the oil fields, they continue to pour in because they hope they may get employment some day or other ?—Yes, that is a fact. We do not advertise for labourers, they come in of their own accord.

M-203. Would it not be a greater security to the workers if they were paid at monthly rates instead of daily rates?—The Company used to pay at monthly rates at one time, but now they prefer to pay at daily rates. The other establishments of the Burmah Oil Company, such as the Syriam refinery and so on are all on daily rates of pay.

M-204. Why was the monthly basis changed to daily basis?—I do not know. I think it is more convenient for accounting purposes.

M-205. *Mr. Clow*: Are they paid monthly or fortnightly?—Monthly.

M-206. *Mr. Cliff*: How do you fill vacancies from among the men who have registered for employment? Who selects them and in what order?—With regard to Burmans, copies of the register of men seeking employment in the different departments are posted in the verandah here and each man knows his exact position on the list. With regard to Indians this is not done as the Oriyas and the Telugus are unable to read and write, and it is impossible to translate the register into various vernaculars for this purpose. When a vacancy occurs in any department and a requisition comes here, the names of the men on the register suitable for the particular job are called one after another from this verandah in the order in which they have registered, and the first eligible man who is present is sent to the department to fill the vacancy.

M-207. Has the departmental manager to accept any man you send him?—As regards unskilled labour, yes; as regards skilled labour I send him two or three men and he selects one.

M-208. Your figures show that there has been a large percentage of discharges. Could you explain what this is due to?—I do not think the figure is large. The total number of discharges in the month of January 1930 for various reasons, such as reduction of staff, bad attendance, neglect of duty, "own accord", and so on, is only 3·94 per cent. of the pay roll.

M-209. If a man is discharged, has he any opportunity to appeal against the order? Who takes up his case?—Every order of discharge has to go through me and I have to sign it. The man has then an opportunity of making a representation. If he makes a representation I enquire into the matter. In some cases it may be a trifling disagreement with a supervisor, or, in the case of absence, the man or his family may have been ill; in such cases after enquiry I may quash the discharge and transfer the man to some other gang. There is little real benefit to the man in re-instating him under the supervisor who recommended his discharge.

M-210. How many of these men who have been discharged have succeeded in having that decision upset by you?—I cannot tell you off-hand, but the number of discharges has been considerably reduced since the Labour Bureau was started. Before the discharge of any man is confirmed his case is fully gone into and except in extreme cases a man is not discharged.

M-211. Could you give us the percentage of dismissals and discharges to the total number of men employed each year since the creation of the Labour Bureau?—Yes.

M-212. Have you any record of the short-time or the under-employment of men on your pay roll?—I have no knowledge of any under-employment

having existed previous to 1930. The men here work for a full month or we discharge them. This morning I heard of a case of under-employment and I have called for the wages books to see in what months it has taken place.

M-213. You have given some figures with regard to retrenchments that have taken place during 15 days in August 1929. Have you any record of the retrenchments that have taken place during the last two years?—We can collect the figures. I will give an example of our efforts to reduce the number of discharges. Take the drilling department. There is a gang of Burman drillers engaged in drilling a well. They drill the well and complete the job. In the past these men on completion of the job were discharged. That caused a number of discharges. In order to avoid this, we formed a pool called the drilling pool and into that drilling pool the discharged Burman driller helpers were put up to the number of 100. These men were employed at a reduced rate of pay on other jobs in the place of Indians. If their drilling pay was Rs. 30 a month they would get Rs. 28 a month on other forms of work. When they resume their normal drilling work they again receive their normal pay. When new wells are to be drilled, instead of engaging new men we engage drillers from the drilling pool. There are two pools: there is a pool for unskilled labour and a pool for Burman drillers which we call the drilling pool. The unskilled labour pool is round about 1100 and the Burman drilling pool is about 100.

M-214. If men earning more than Rs. 34 per month go on leave and come back according to the rule, does their previous service count for the provident fund?—Yes, and for any *ex gratia* payments.

M-215. *Mr. Tyabji*: What is meant when you speak in your memorandum of regulated, non-regulated and exempted establishments?—Those are merely technical terms under the Factories Act under which exemption is given in respect of continuous processes and so on.

M-216. Does it apply to exemption from the Workmen's Compensation Act?—No.

M-217. Can you give us any idea as to the number of accidents in regulated, non-regulated and exempted establishments?—The figures appear in our memorandum.

M-218. You mention that there is a very stringent enquiry into all these accidents. Who makes that enquiry?—We ourselves make the enquiry into trivial accidents; the Warden enquires into serious accidents.

M-219. What steps do you take to eliminate the causes of accidents?—We classify the accidents under different headings, roughly as preventible and non-preventible. Meetings are held from time to time in the Agent's office which heads of departments attend, and measures are discussed for the prevention of accidents.

M-220. If you retrenched a man and later on employed him again, would he be paid the same rate of wages?—It would depend on whether he was a clerk, skilled workman or unskilled workman. If he were a clerk it would depend on what the Department were offering; I should not fix the rate. If he were a skilled workman it would depend on what the Department were

paying for the particular job the man was required to fill. Driller helpers, well pullers and rig-builders are definitely graded. All would depend on the vacancy the man was required to fill.

M-221. Supposing a man started on an initial wage of Rs. 100, served for 10 years and reached a salary of Rs. 200; if he were then retrenched and subsequently re-engaged, at what salary would he be employed?—I could not say; it would depend on what the Department were offering.

M-222. Would his previous service count?—It would make him worth more money in that particular job; I imagine they would pay him more than a new man because he would be highly skilled.

M-223. So that he might quite probably be engaged on the salary on which he was working before he left?—Yes, he might.

M-224. You have a lot of men registering themselves for employment?—Yes.

M-225. I understand the system is that these people are sent up to the Department for test as to whether they are suitable or not?—Skilled men are.

M-226. Are they then classed in four classes?—In the workshops they are.

M-227. If a man is required for the workshops does the requisition from the workshops mention the class of man required?—Sometimes.

M-228. If the class is mentioned, you can send up the man whose name appears first in that class?—Men are registered according to their qualifications.

M-229. So that in that way favouritism can be avoided?—Quite, there can be none.

M-230. *U Aye Maung*: Is it the custom for registered men on the waiting list for employment to present themselves at your office every morning?—Unskilled men, yes.

M-231. Is there any appointed time?—No.

M-232. How are they to know at what time to come here?—They know the office hours.

M-233. Is there any particular time during office hours when you call out the names of those who are wanted and who are to be given work?—There is no special appointed time; it usually takes place between about 7 and 9 in the morning and again before 3 o'clock in the afternoon. The medical examination of the men selected in the morning takes place at about half-past 9. Men are very seldom selected after half-past 3; any requisitions for labour that come in after that hour are held over till the next day.

M-234. Have you any objection to the meetings of the workers councils being presided over by their own elected presidents instead of the Labour Superintendent?—I personally have no objection; whether the Company has any objection I do not know.

M-235. *Mr. Ahmed*: Will the Company allow you to do that?—I cannot say; I merely say I have no personal objection.

M-236. You do not mind my putting certain questions in contradiction to what you have said?—No.

M-237. I understand you to say that since 1924 you have instituted this Labour Bureau because of the nasty experience the Company had in the strike of 1923 ?—Yes.

M-238. Your object is to remove the cause of strikes : to deal with claims for increments of wages and to eliminate favouritism and corruption. If a man has a grievance, such as a demand for higher pay, do you not think it would be better that such a grievance should come through a trade union rather than through you, the Superintendent of this Bureau of the B.O.C., who is an interested person in so far as your Company is concerned ? Would it not be better if the grievances of the workers were put forward by their own organization, their trade union or labour union ?—I would rather not answer that ; I will leave that to the higher officials of the Company.

M-239. *The Chairman* : That is a question as to the policy of the Company ?—Yes.

M-240. *Mr. Ahmed* : So that the policy of your Company is such that you yourself cannot as an individual give your opinion on this subject because you are a Superintendent of the B. O. C. ?

*The Chairman* : Not to this Commission, but I take it you are free to give many opinions to your Company ?—Yes, I can give my opinions to my Company, but in view of the way the question was put, as to whether I consider it better that the men's petitions should come through a union or through me, I would rather the higher officials of the Company answered it.

*Mr. Ahmed* : Then I understand that the higher officials are coming and I can put that question to them.

*The Chairman* :—You can put any relevant question to the higher officials.

M-241. *Mr. Ahmed* : The question of housing is within your sphere as Superintendent of this Bureau ?—Yes.

M-242. Suppose there is a family dispute arising out of the housing problem ; for instance, you allow one room for a married couple free of rent ; but suppose a worker has parents and grown-up children, they cannot all live in the same room together, and if they have a grievance of that sort, you do not supply them with more than one room ?—That is not quite true, because there are many cases where men have two rooms ; a man with grown-up children is given two rooms ; a man who can put up a case for having his parents to live with him has been given two rooms. There are several cases of men with children over 12 years of age who have two rooms, even though they are only on a pay of Rs. 30.

M-243. What percentage of the workers will that amount to ?—Quite small, but it does exist.

M-244. There have been grievances like that ?—There have been grievances like that, and all the grievances of that nature that have been put up have been dealt with, as I said, by giving them two rooms. In cases where a grievance has not been put forward, nothing has been done, unless it has come to light by inspections or things of that description. If the grievance has been put forward, an arrangement has been made whereby a man in those peculiar circumstances has been given two rooms.

M-245. Do you recognize any trade union or labour union here ; because you are doing their job, do you welcome them or recognize them ?—There was a labour union in 1923 with whom we used to work and exchange correspondence and so on. Then to the best of my knowledge that seemed to drop into the background. It appeared again before 1926 ; during 1926 they were very prominent and then again from time to time we had letters from them. In 1926 there was a strike which was unsuccessful from the men's point of view and the labour union seemed to go right into the back ground ; I think one of its officials died and the other left the town.

M-246. Therefore you do not listen to them and do not recognize them ?—I cannot if they do not put up any suggestions to us.

M-247. *The Chairman* : In the last four years, since 1926, have you had any collective representation from any body of workers ?—No, not until just before I came back, which was a few days prior to this Commission coming.

M-248. *Mr. Ahmed* : Are you aware that there are a number of unions now ? Yesterday we saw them on the shore of the river. Do you recognize them ?—I frankly did not recognize them ; they were new to me.

M-249. *The Chairman* : You have had no communication with them except in connection with our visit, I take it ?—Not until quite recently.

M-250. *Mr. Cliff* : I did understand you to say that just prior to your coming back there had been some communication from this union ?—Yes ; they had I think sent copies of various notices and so on and had asked for certain workmen to be given leave to attend and give evidence to the Commission. Their request was granted.

M-251. *Mr. Ahmed* : You deal with questions of justified or unjustified discharges and dismissals yourself without hearing any union ?—I have already answered that.

M-252. *The Chairman* : The answer is that until just lately there has been no vocal union ?—There has been no vocal union for the past two or three years.

*Mr. Ahmed* : Yesterday on the banks of the river we heard them shouting and cheering the Chairman and Members of this Commission. Is not that vocal ?

*The Chairman* : It is not a formal petition.

M-253. *Mr. Ahmed* : Do you find that almost all the workers of the B. O. C. send remittances home ?—A very large percentage of the Indian workers send remittances home.

M-254. All of them who have come to work here incur costs of from \*Rs. 30 to Rs. 40 to come to this place from India ?—Yes.

M-255. I suppose it is not your function to know whether those remittances are sent in order to pay off debts incurred in that way ; but it may be, that is so ?—I cannot say ; what I can say is that men who have been questioned about their expenses and so forth have told us that they remit certain sums to India every month, and those sums are round about Rs. 10 per month.

M-256. Is it not also a fact that they are habitually indebted at home, that is the reason why they come here, and that they live here in very poor style in order that they may send a portion of their wages home ?—I am not in agreement with the second part of the question because we have information supplied by different workmen such as an Indian on Rs. 30 a month who was living in a mess and spending a certain sum on messing, when he was promoted to Rs. 42 a month lived in the same mess, spending exactly the same amount on his ordinary food, spending a little more on extra fish and on toddy, and his remittances home increased.

M-257. In these messes they only have one or two meals a day ; they do not have four or five meals a day ?—That is the messing system : two meals a day.

M-258. He does not get four or five meals a day ?—No, but he is a free agent, he can go to another mess or mess on his own ; he is not compelled to stay in the same mess.

M-259. On pay day a lot of creditors ask for their money ?—I did not say a lot ; I said there were a certain number of creditors.

M-260. That indicates that the workers are indebted ?—Yes.

M-261. The workers do not get any leave, do they ; if a worker does not come to work, on account of a festivity, he does not get any pay ?—If absent on any day other than the recognized holidays granted by the Company, that is so ; no work, no pay. The Company grants 10 holidays during the year to workmen. If a man is absent on account of festivals other than those recognized by the Company he gets no pay.

M-262. *Mr. Clow* : In answer to the Chairman you said that if a skilled man wanted to go on leave he was given leave, his name was registered and he was allowed to resume his old post when he came back. What is your objection to adopting the same system in the case of unskilled men also ?—It is not possible at present to adopt the same system in the case of unskilled men, because the numbers applying would probably be large. Moreover we are not yet in a position to guarantee that an unskilled man will be re-employed on his return on the same job and at the same rate of pay.

M-263. You said that the married quarters for Burman workmen cost about Rs. 200 each quarter. What is the annual cost of their upkeep ?—I cannot tell you off-hand.

M-264. How long does each last ?—A little more than 3 years before needing repair to roof and matting walls.

M-265. *U Hla Bu* : It might be that the roof lasts 3 to 5 years, but the buildings last for 20 years ?—The houses last much longer when the man is living in his own house. It is not so when the man is living in the Company's house. He is not so careful about the Company's house as he is about his own house.

M-266. *Mr. Clow* : You said that there were 1,100 unskilled labourers in the pool ; does that mean that on any day 1,100 men were unemployed ?—No, the men in the pool are employed on some work although it may be other

than the work they have been normally doing. One department may be reducing its requisitions from say 900 to 750, while another department may be increasing its strength. All that we do is to pool all these men and send them out to departments as required.

M-267. Have you any figures to show the number of men who are totally unemployed and have no job at all?—If this refers to the men in the pool, there are none at all.

M-268. You gave 4 per cent. of the pay roll as the percentage of dismissals in a particular month. It means that on an average you dismiss about 50 per cent. of your men every year. Surely that seems very high?—The figure given includes men who leave us of their own accord. For instance, in January 1930, 3·94 per cent. of the pay roll were discharged and can be divided as follows :—

Month.	Left of	Other discharges including retrench-	Total.
	own accord.	ment, discharges of substitutes for men on leave and dismissals.	
	%	%	%
January ..	1·71	2·23	3·94
March ..	2·58	2·78	5·36
April ..	2·12	3·0	5·12

M-269. Then your dismissals average about 30 per cent. a year. From your experience of the industry would you say that it is not a high proportion?—We are cutting it down and the object in establishing the general and drilling pools is to secure permanency of tenure for the labourers.

M-270. You dismiss about 3,000 men every year; do a number of them come back under different names?—No, many of them come back under their own names. When a man is discharged there is no definite bar against his coming back. If he has been discharged for a slight mistake he is always given another chance. There are many people who have been born here; they definitely form a part of the industrial population here and we always give them four or five chances. If a man is discharged to-day he might register for employment to-morrow especially, if he is a local Burman.

M-271. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: So that a man may register and be discharged two or three times a year?—Yes.

M-272. *Sir Alexander Murray*: In your memorandum you say that the average monthly discharges and retirements for 1928 for all causes were 8 per cent. of the total pay roll. At that rate you should be turning over your whole labour force once a year. But we were talking to some labourers this morning some of whom had been here for 7 or 8 years and had not even gone home once. If that is the normal state of affairs, there must be something wrong with your figures of turnover?—As I said before, there are many men, especially Burmans, who have been discharged and engaged four or five times a year.

M-273. Do you discharge a man when he goes on leave with your permission?—In the case of unskilled labour, if the man goes on leave outside Burma we discharge him and take his name out of the pay roll. We do not

do it in the case of skilled labourers. Generally the Burmans go on very short leave extending from 7 to 21 days. Substitutes have to be employed for such men, and on their return from leave, the substitutes have to be discharged.

M-274. In selecting men from those who have registered what principle do you adopt?—As a general rule we adopt the principle of priority of registration; the man who has registered first is preferred to the man who comes after him. But occasionally there are exceptions. For instance, when a man goes on leave the head of the department in which he has been working sends a recommendation that he should be re-employed when he returns from leave. There are also cases where men have put in long periods of service. In such cases we give them preference over men who register in the ordinary way. But if a man registers without any special recommendation or with very small period of service to his credit he has to take his turn with the others on the list.

M-275. Suppose a man wanted to go on leave and he asked you to put his brother or some one of his relations in his place so that he might come back and take his own job, would you agree to do it?—It would depend on whether the substitute was equally efficient. If he was an equally efficient man we would take the matter up with the employing department.

M-276. So that there are very generous exceptions?—Yes; quite so. As a general rule we observe the order of registration because we have to avoid the continual scramble and fight for priority.

M-277. Have you any control over the contractors' labour? Who pays the contractors' men?—The contractors themselves. They are not on our books. We pay only those on our roll.

M-278. How many men work under the contractors?—It all depends on the quantity of work going on at the time. I think they would never exceed four to five hundred.

M-279. With regard to facilities for adult education, could you not get better results if you let the men off two hours of your time on certain days in order that they might be able to take full advantage of the facilities offered for their improvement?—The difficulty is owing to the peculiar nature of the industry—the shifts run all round the 24 hours. Shifts also are constantly changed in order that all the men may have a fair distribution of day and night work. That is not the only difficulty. In the case of athletic sports, night schools and things of that kind the men do not take much interest. When they are off work they want to be left alone. They have to be spurred to take up "after work" recreation.

M-280. At any rate there should be a certain number of men whom you would promote as foremen and so on, and such men would surely welcome an opportunity to improve themselves. Could you not select such men and let them off a few hours before the work closes so that they might attend the classes?—It would only be a very small percentage, but I should think we could work somewhat on those lines.

(The witness withdrew.)

**U Ba THAN** (Honorary Secretary), **U TIN GYI** (Head Driller, Burmah Oil Company), **U THU DAW** (Pleader and Twinsa), **U THA ZA** (Well Puller, Burmah Oil Company), **U KHANT** (Blacksmith, Burmah Oil Company), **ALI HAMID** (Turner, Burmah Oil Company), **U MYAT SAN** (Head Carpenter, Indo-Burma Petroleum Company), **U HTI BU** (Pensioner, Burmah Oil Company), representatives of the Burma Labour Union, Yenangyaung.

M-281. *The Chairman* : U Ba Than, I understand you are the honorary secretary of the Burma Labour Union ?—(*U Ba Than*) Yes.

M-282. And you have come to meet the Commission with a number of your fellow members of the union ?—Yes.

M-283. I think perhaps it will help you most if I just ask you, in the first instance, to say anything that you wish to say to the Labour Commission?—I may, in the first place, say that the Burma Labour Union is in existence since 1922, and I work for it in an honorary capacity. I have been in this place for over 15 years, though not continuously. I had gone to Rangoon and came here only recently. I think it will be better if I enumerate a few of the grievances which the employees here have. It very often happens that if the labour union represents anything to the company it is considered to be an extremist body. Though the Burman drillers are clever in their work the rate of pay they get is very small as compared with the rate of pay given to Americans and Europeans. It will be of interest to the Commission if I were to give the number of men in the employ of some of the oil companies here at certain periods. In the Burmah Oil Company on 7th January 1928 there were 11,570 while there were only 8,922 on 20th September 1930, or a decrease of 2,648. In the case of Indo-Burma Petroleum Company, the figures for the corresponding periods are 628 and 828, that is, an increase of 200, while in the case of H. D. S. the figures were 1,194 and 643 or a decrease of 551. I cannot give the Commission the number of European and American employees on the roll of the Burmah Oil Company and the total amount drawn by them in a year. But I hope the Commission will call for it and compare it with the pay roll of the Burman and Indian employees. You might have noticed the men working in the standard and rotary drillings when you visited the field this morning. You might also have noticed that an American driller gets not less than Rs. 1,000 a month and a Scotchman Rs. 350—500 approximately ; while a Burman driller gets only Rs. 55 to 175.

M-284. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Does the American get three times as much as the Scotchman ?—Yes. The Burman driller can do the same work as is done by either the American or the Scotchman, but he does not know English. Formerly, for work on a 4" hole we used to get 8 or 10 men, but now the company gives only 6. We think that the number should be at least 8. For a 10" hole, we are given 8 men while we want 10 ; for a 13" hole or more we have 12 men and we want 14. In rotary wells the crew at present consists of 10 men. As they have to handle very heavy tools and pipes we want 12 to 14 men according to the size of the pipe. We desire that there should be 3 grades for Burman drillers. The third driller's grade should be Rs. 250—25—325,

the second 350—25—425, and the first 450—25—525; and they should be given a house allowance of Rs. 30, 45 and 55 a month, respectively. For helpers we suggest a pay of 40, 45 and 50, and for assistant drillers, 60, 70, 80 and 85—90. These grades should apply to both standard and rotary drillings. We have suggested Rs. 40 for a helper because we consider that to be the minimum living wage here. You may be aware that the price of foodstuffs is very dear in this place. For instance, if you pay Rs. 11 for rice at Rangoon you may have to pay Rs. 13 here.

M-285. *Mr. Cliff*: What rate does the crew get now?—Rs. 30.

*Mr. Tait*: There is a graduated scale. The minimum is Rs. 30.

*The witness*: (*U Ba Than*). Another point that we wish to place before you relates to the freedom of association. The Labour Department of the Burmah Oil Company does a lot of under-hand work. It has in its employ a secret agent who moves about the town and reports to the Labour Superintendent the activities of the workers. Consequently the men are afraid of making any representations. They fear that if they do so they may be dispensed with. I have before me a notice served on one Maung San Myint by the Burmah Oil Company on 22nd July 1925. It says "Services not required. Was given a month's pay in lieu of notice. Character good, ability good." He has not been recalled to service although several hundreds of men were appointed since his discharge, because he was an active worker of our union. We shall be very much obliged to the Commission if they can get us freedom of association in this place. Another thing we want is unemployment insurance. As the men have to wait for a long time before they can get employment, some system of unemployment insurance is very necessary. The next thing refers to workmen's compensation. As the men handle heavy tools there is every likelihood of many accidents taking place. In America only 2 or 3 drillers work in a well whereas 15 or 16 work here. I do not know whether there is any difference between the tools used in America and the tools used here, but I suggest that one way of preventing accidents is by keeping a sufficient number of men in the crew so that they can handle the tools easily.

*Mr. Tait*: There is no difference in the tools used in America and those used here.

*The witness*: (*U Ba Than*) Before compensation is given, the Labour Bureau conducts an inquiry, and the officer in charge of the board decides the matter.

M-286. *Mr. Clow*: Is there not a Commissioner for workmen's compensation?—Yes, there is one now. Before the Warden became the Commissioner we have taken several cases to the court at Magwe. The Burmah Oil Company doctor said that there were cases which were unclaimable but we won them in the court. We desire that the Government hospital here should have a higher grade qualified doctor. Another thing we desire is that co-operative banks should be started for the benefit of the employees. Because there is no such co-operative bank, what the men do is to purchase rice from

the Burmah Oil Company stores at Rs. 15 and sell it to the bazaar shopkeeper at Rs. 12, that is, one rupee less than the bazaar rate. Thus the poor labourer loses Rs. 3 because he cannot get money on the day he requires it. With regard to housing, the requirements of the Burman worker differ from those of the Ooriya. The Burman workers live with their families and dependants, and therefore enough room should be provided. So we want freedom of association ; we should be allowed to work for our association. The Company should not interfere if we send out calls for donations ; the Company should not send their detectives to enquire as to why we are doing it.

M-287. *The Chairman* : I think you said that this Burma Labour Union had been in existence since 1922 ?—Yes.

M-288. Have you a record of the number of members from 1922 down to 1930 ?—We have no such list. We are representing the workers in general ; we have an executive committee.

M-289. You have not had any subscriptions or list of members all the time ?—No.

M-290. Have you any list of members now, or do you just call a large meeting and take membership at the meeting ?—Whenever we started to do it there was some one after us. We are only helping the workers, and they say that the Company will not like it if an association is formed. So we cannot do our work openly. We ask for donations. The workers are afraid of dismissal, because hundreds of employees have been dismissed for becoming members of our union.

M-291. What you want is that the Company should frankly recognize an association of their workers ?—Yes.

M-292. You have complained to us that there has been some victimization which, you think, has been due to attempts to form a union. Is that so ?—Yes.

M-293. Have you sent any written communication to the Company in the last 12 months ?—No. Before that, we did so over the Thatameda question.

M-294. So, you do not know whether the Company would or would not receive a communication from you on the points that you mentioned to us to-day ?—It is doubtful whether they will do anything. We understood that this Commission was coming to Burma, and we have dared to lay before you our grievances. I do not know what will happen afterwards.

M-295. I am sure I could say for myself and for my colleagues that we were interested to listen to you to-day and to hear all that you have told us. But there are many of the questions that you have dealt with which this Commission cannot itself deal with, such as the question of the rates of wages or the number of workmen in a drilling gang. Have you yourself ever conversed with the Labour Superintendent on these questions ?—No, because from the manner of the correspondence between ourselves and the Company we can know that if we speak to them about our grievances, it will not be minded. Every day we get information from our workers through the intelligence clerk that nothing will be done.

M-296. Do you know that there are two workers Councils which are elected by the workers ?—Yes ; very lately.

M-297. Are any of the gentlemen who are with you to-day elected to these councils?—Yes, U Tin Gyi is a member of the workers council.

M-298. He has an opportunity in the Council to raise these questions?—They are afraid to do it for fear of being reduced or transferred. Mg Bo is too much for them. He threatens that if they talk against the Company, they would be sacked.

M-299. *Sir Alexander Murray*: Have you registered your trade union under the Trade Unions Act?—As we have got no list of members up to now, we cannot do it.

M-300. Have you any constitution at all?—Yes.

M-301. Have you got a copy of it?—No.

M-302. Do I understand you to say that you want more pay for your drillers?—Yes.

M-303. And you want more drillers in the squad?—Not more drillers.

M-304. In the statement that we got from the Burmah Oil Company, they say that where 2 Americans are required to drill a well, 6 to 12 Burmans are required. Is that so?—Yes, because the apparatus or tools are quite different.

M-305. *Mr. Tait*: You are not an oil worker, and the other leader of the union also is not an oil worker, and therefore you do not know what the conditions are?—We are doing our own business. We are honorary workers. As there is no one to represent them, we are doing it. We have collected these grievances from the others.

M-306. *Mr. Clow*: Has your union any Indian members on it?—Yes. There is one present here. He is a native of Bengal.

M-307. *Mr. Birla*: Since the inauguration of your union, did you ever officially approach the employers for its recognition?—If they allow it, we would be glad to do it.

M-308. How do you know whether they would allow it or not?—We have approached them several times. Sometimes we got affirmative and sometimes negative replies.

M-309. Could you send us a copy of the correspondence?—Yes, I can.

M-310. Did you say that the Workers Councils have only recently been formed?—These councils have been in existence for the last 4 years. Formerly the members were nominated, but now they are elected.

M-311. *Miss Power*: Have your members paid any subscriptions at any time?—No. We ask for donations, not subscriptions. That has to be done on the quiet.

M-312. *Mr. Tait*: Is one of the objects of your association to provide more work for Burmans on the oilfields and less work for Indians?—Not exactly like that. If the American driller is paid a certain amount, the Burman driller should get the same.

M-313. *Mr. Clow*: What do you mean when you say that it is not exactly the object of your association to reduce the employment of Indians?—We have no objection to Indians being employed here.

M-314. You do not want to reduce their number?—The Burma Labour Union does not want to do it.

M-315. *Mr. Tyabji*: Could you tell me in what manner the election to the Workers Councils took place?—The men were elected by the workers, and the voting was by poll.

M-316. Do you find any difficulty in calling meetings for labour union purposes?—No.

M-317. There is no hindrance from the Company?—No, not openly.

M-318. Do you find any sort of difficulty?—If you ask in a general way I should say, no.

M-319. *Mr. Cliff*: With regard to the freedom of association you did say that there was under-hand work going on. What did you mean by that?—The Labour Department keeps a man called an intelligence clerk. He goes round the town and collects information for supply to the Labour Bureau. As an instance, I may say that a year ago the mother-in-law of the president of our union died and many of his friends and admirers went to attend her funeral, and, according to the custom of the Burmese, contributed money. This intelligence clerk reported to his officer the names of those who were present at the funeral and of those who donated. People are therefore very much afraid of him.

M-320. How do you know that?—Because we get reports from the workers.

M-321. Is that fear on the part of the workers very widespread?—Yes; they are very much afraid of him.

M-322. Is he a big man?—Yes.

M-323. Has he made any reports against individuals that you know of?—Yes.

M-324. Can you quote a case to the Commission?—I have already quoted a case, and that is that of Maung San Myint who was a head rig builder. He was one of our active workers and he was discharged from service in July 1925.

M-325. Have you had any cases recently?—We had one Mg Mo as our member. He is a driller drawing Rs. 175. He is not attending our union for the last one week because, we understand, that he was made known that if he continued his membership in the union he could not expect any increase in pay but that if he left the union he would get more pay.

M-326. Have the members of the union which you have been gathering said in your recent meetings anything about the working of the Labour Bureau?—No.

M-327. Do the work-people agree that the working of the Labour Bureau has tended to eliminate bribery?—We do not think so.

M-328. Have you any information on that at all?—No.

M-329. You referred to unemployment insurance. Would your people be prepared to pay a regular contribution in order to provide for unemployment insurance?—Yes, we are ready to make a contribution.

M-330. Have you consulted them on that point?—Yes.

M-331. Is there very much unemployment here?—Yes.

M-332. How many people do you think are unemployed at the present time?—More than 600.

M-333. Are there skilled workers unemployed as well as unskilled workers?—Yes.

Can you give any idea to the Commission as to how that 600 is divided as between skilled and unskilled workers?—I cannot say that at the moment. We are now busy preparing a list, and we have already 400 on our list.

M-334. Have you any idea as to how long these men have been unemployed?—Some have been unemployed since two years and some since three years.

M-335. You said that you have got a list of 400 names. Amongst those unemployed people are there any who have previously worked for the Company?—Yes.

M-336. Will they have been out of employment for more than a year?—More than two years even.

M-337. *Sir Alexander Murray*: How do they live in the meantime?—By selling some sweets, etc.

M-338. *Mr. Cliff*: With regard to the contested cases under the Workmen's Compensation Act which were taken at some place removed from here, did you obtain independent medical opinion in those cases?—Yes, by a Government I. M. S. doctor.

M-339. *Mr. Clow*: The Commissioner sits here now, does he not?—Yes, at present.

M-340. *The Chairman*: How long is it since you came to Yenangyaung from Rangoon?—I came here a month ago.

M-341. Up to one month ago you have been for some years in Rangoon?—Yes.

M-342. In this month you have been re-creating the labour union which had not been doing very much for some years?—Because there was no important business to do.

M-343. You had previously worked here, I understand, as a clerk?—When I joined the union I was a school teacher at Yenangyaung.

M-344. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: Were you not a clerk before that?—I was first a clerk and then a school teacher.

(The witnesses withdrew.)

## BURMA.

## Third Meeting.

## YENANGYAUNG.

Tuesday, 28th October 1930.

## PRESENT :

The Rt. Hon'ble J. H. WHITLEY (*Chairman*).

Sir VICTOR SASSOON, Bart.

Sir ALEXANDER MURRAY, K.T., C.B.E.

Mr. A. G. CLOW, C.I.E., I.C.S.

Mr. KABIR-UD-DIN AHMED, Bar.-at-Law.

Mr. G. D. BIRLA.

Mr. J. TAIT.

U AYE MAUNG.

Mr. S. A. S. TYABJI.

U HLA BU

Mr. S. LALL, I.C.S.

Mr. A. DIBDIN.

Mr. JOHN CLIFF.

Miss B. M. LE POER POWER.

Lt.-Col. A. J. H. RUSSELL, C.B.E.,  
I.M.S. (*Medical Assessor*).} *Assistant Commissioners.*} *Joint Secretaries.*

Mr. J. H. HUNTER (Assistant General Manager in India), Mr. J. WEBSTER (Labour Superintendent), Mr. J. DALGLEISH (Agent, Khodaung Oilfield), Mr. MARR GRIEVE (Superintending Engineer), Mr. H. D. KIPPEN (Fields Accountant), Mr. G. S. TERRY (Fields Medical Officer, Nyaungghla), and Mr. W. B. CRAWFORD (Assistant Fields Medical Officer, Nyaungghla), representatives of the Burmah Oil Company, Ltd., Yenangyaung.

M-345. *The Chairman* : Mr. Hunter, will you first tell us the scope of your responsibility here ?—(*Mr. Hunter*) : I am responsible here for the general management and administration of the Company's oilfields in Burma. I have responsible officers under me for each of the big areas. Our field administration is divided into two main areas : one, the Yenangyaung area, which includes minor oilfields on the other side of the river to the south, viz., Minbu, Palanyon and Yethaya. To the north there is another main area known as Singu which includes subsidiary areas on the other side of the river from Yenangyat up to Sabe. In each of these fields there is a responsible officer called an Agent in executive control and responsible in the first place to me.

M-346. For that wide area you are responsible for general policy and management ?—Yes, under the direction of my Directors in London.

M-347. The General Manager in Rangoon is not in between you and your ultimate authorities in London ?—Not in any executive matters connected with the actual operations or development policy of the oilfields. I use

my discretion in referring to him matters of local policy, affecting other Companies or the Local Government. In the matter of staff, we have schedules of pay, terms, leave, etc., sanctioned by our Directors and covering the various grades of employees. So far as employees whom we term "Fields" men are concerned, the application and operation of these schedules is my responsibility entirely, but in the case of Heads of Fields Department and generally for employees in receipt of not less than Rs. 1,000 per mensem, I refer my recommendations, to the General Manager in Rangoon before final decision is reached. Matters concerning pay, terms, leave or transfer of the administrative office staff, as well as our staff of Geologists and Accountants are referred to the General Manager in Rangoon. I have to study my staff carefully and questions relating to staff take up a large portion of my time.

M-348. We have been specially interested in the appointment of your Labour Superintendent and the establishment of the Labour Bureau. Were you here at the time when that step was taken?—I was here.

M-349. Then, can you tell us the purpose of the Company in taking that step and the scope which was given to the Labour Superintendent after he was appointed? Can you also give us, from the point of view of the Company, the Company's view of the results achieved?—It will be remembered that in the years 1922 and 1923 there was considerable unrest generally in labour throughout India, and in many industrial centres labour strikes occurred. We were not entirely free from them in Burma.

Prior to that time our policy, in common with that of many other industries, had been to carry on until trouble arose and then take measures to deal with it. We had a strike here in 1923 which lasted for 3 or 4 months. That led to a close examination of conditions, and we came to certain conclusions, one of which was that it was essential in the Company's interests that they should get into much closer touch with their labour and the conditions under which they lived and worked. The general lines upon which our labour here had been managed prior to 1923 was that heads of departments worked with subordinates, and they again with further subordinates. The actual labourer would probably be a member of a gang working for a *maistry*, and the *maistry* would be responsible in the first place to a subordinate engineer or driller. The question of engagements, punishments and discharges was very largely in the hands of the subordinate. He was responsible to his immediate superior in his Department, and he again through the usual channels to the General Manager. But in practice a very great deal of power was in the hands of the man for whom the coolies were actually working. The Departments guarded their powers and rights over their coolies somewhat jealously, and the main difficulty that we had to contend with in any change was with our own departmental heads. I myself personally was very much involved in this, and was in part responsible for the Company's policy, which to begin with involved a reduction of the Department's power of taking disciplinary action and making engagements and discharges. That naturally met with a great deal of opposition. The Labour Superintendent was then appointed and the outlines of the organization framed. Of course it has taken time for the organization to grow up to

its present form, but the first principle that we laid down was that the Departments must refer to our central employment agency in the matter of engagements and discharges. The main arguments against it on the part of the Departments concerned were that if they did not engage the men they wanted, men that they probably knew, they would get men who were unsuitable for the job, that they would lose their authority over the men and discipline would suffer. The Departments maintained that attitude stoutly for the best part of three years. It was only by making it very clear that the organization had come to stay and would if necessary outlast the heads of Departments that the Labour Bureau was established. At the same time it was made clear to the Labour Superintendent that he was essentially, from the Company's point of view, the representative of Labour, and it was his business to find out their needs and their aspirations and to endeavour to obtain justice for them. It was our wish that he should secure the goodwill and the confidence of our labour; the retention of his job was to depend upon the extent to which he fulfilled that object, and that is still the case.

M-350. The Labour Superintendent reports to and consults with only yourself; there is no intermediary?—He deals, on behalf of the labourers, with heads of Departments, if he thinks necessary, with the subordinate for whom the men are actually working. If there should be any difficulty he goes to the Agent or comes to me. But the instances of difficulty which were frequent and constantly recurring in the early years have very largely disappeared, and matters are now usually settled amicably as a result of the co-operation which exists between the Labour Bureau and employing Departments. The basic principle of the organization is that the Labour Superintendent must retain the confidence of our labour and his job depends upon his ability to do this. We consider him to be on the side of labour and he is only concerned with the Company's point of view to the extent of endeavouring to see that the men's attitude and requests are reasonable.

M-351. Has he freedom to make representations to you on all matters affecting the personal lives of the workers?—Absolutely.

M-352. In general terms, I suppose you are not able to accept every one of his recommendations?—No. There is a limit to what is economically possible. But the Members of the Commission will have seen things like our schools, sports ground, general housing and Profit Sharing Stores. The Labour Superintendent puts up his ideas and I recommend them to the Directors as seems feasible and economically possible. There have been very few of his recommendations that have not been accepted.

M-353. You have told us of the difficulties of the first three years. But now that things have settled down, can you give us your view as to whether it has been worth while from the Company's point of view making this departure?—We think it has been distinctly worth while, and we believe that our Labour Superintendent has earned the confidence of our labour. It is a little difficult to prove that, because our workers who are contented and steady do not raise their voice at all. The agitation or propaganda of any sort that does arise is always from outside, carried on mainly by people who are not in our employ.

M-354. It was represented to us yesterday that some at any rate of your workers believe that the policy of your Company was to deny them freedom of association. That is a thing we have often heard in other places. Supposing the men desire collectively to present requests to the company, and supposing further they desire to form a union which should be the medium to present to you their requests, what would be the view of your Company?—My Company's attitude towards that would be entirely sympathetic, subject to some conditions. The first and essential condition, as far as the Company is concerned, is that such a union should be really representative of our workers. There have been unions in the past and the attitude of my Company towards them has always been one of willingness to co-operate, even though we have not yet in our experience dealt with a union which we considered to be representative. We realise that those unions might have been just the beginnings, and they might in time have achieved a wider and fuller representation of all classes, and we have never refused to deal with them or treat with them.

M-355. Is it your view that the workers' councils, which we are told have now been made elective, improve the means of enabling your workers, to become vocal and lead to organization amongst themselves for representation?—That is my Company's view, and it is their policy that the workers' councils should develop on these lines; they were indeed inaugurated for this purpose. The Labour Superintendent presides at the meetings of the workers' councils essentially in his capacity as the labourers' advocate. It is not his function at the meetings to make any decision. He is there merely to guide and direct them. As we know, these men themselves have little or no experience of the conducting of meetings.

M-356. It is your wish that the Labour Superintendent should help the workmen themselves to become vocal?—That is certainly our wish.

M-357. *Sir Alexander Murray*: We had some information yesterday from Mr. Webster regarding the number of changes that were taking place in your establishment. Personally I was rather struck by the tremendous amount of turnover. It used to be that you practically turned over your labour once in a year. Now you have a turnover once in two years. Why should there be such a large turnover?—With regard to the figures particularly under review, for 1927-28, one explanation is found in the fact that the oil industry is rather a hand to mouth business, as far as production is concerned. You have to build up your marketing organization, your transport from your refining centres to your marketing centres and your refining organization to a certain economic figure. While you cannot exceed that, it may be disastrous to be very much short of that figure. Therefore, you want steady production, but nature does not always provide us with a steady production. We find that the sands from which we obtain our production are what is known as patchy. We may have a programme of development worked out to give us a steady production, but our experience is that it is always the unexpected that happens. We may for a period of six months get a constant succession of failures or comparative failures, something less than what we expected. Then in the following six months we may be fortunate and get more than we expected. This naturally leads to rises and falls in the amount of drilling activity. After a period of bad luck, we are obliged to increase our drilling, and if we have a period of good luck, we are obliged to ease

off. That is a necessary condition of the oil industry the world over. In this field we are very much more immune from that now than has been the case in the past, because the field is fairly fully developed, and we have passed from the stage in which we had to depend upon a comparatively small number of big and variable wells for our production to the stage at which we have a large number of small and relatively steady wells. In the years 1925 and 1926 we had one of these bad patches. There were sands in this field which we counted on for our forward production, but we had a succession of disappointments. At the end of 1926 our stocks had fallen to such a low level that the position had become serious and a continued fall would have meant curtailing the throughput of our refinery. We came to the conclusion that increased drilling was necessary. In the Yenangyaung field we endeavoured to keep our pay roll more or less stable. In our Singu field, more commonly known as Chauk, which we regard as our reserve, we embarked upon an intensive programme, and during 1927-1928 our labour force at Chauk was doubled. That in itself will account for the figures for those years, which cannot be taken as representative. To some extent drilling and production need specialized labour. A number of special drilling and production men were available in the Yenangyaung Field, and to a limited extent numbers at Chauk were made up by drafting men from Yenangyaung.

M-358. That will explain why in this particular area you had a great number of what appear to be discharges. They would be taken up at Chauk and other places. Does that apply to 1929 and 1930?—In 1929 and 1930 the conditions were more normal.

M-359. *The Chairman*: We asked you yesterday if you could favour us with percentages that would analyse your turnover. Could you take them out?—(*Mr. Webster*). We went into the question of discharges last night and found that two things had been omitted, *viz.*, the discharges of men who had been engaged as substitutes to work for men on local leave and the large number of durwans who are employed temporarily at week ends to watch over the materials on wells during the process of cementing. Taking the month of February, the total discharges for these two reasons were 4·98 per cent. of the pay roll. Resignations account for 2·58 per cent. Men engaged as substitutes for men on local leave who were discharged on the return of the men taking leave accounted for 0·72 per cent. Durwans and domestic servants accounted for 0·84 per cent. and the remainder who were discharged on account of reduction, negligence, death and other causes accounted for 0·84 per cent.

M-360. *Sir Alexander Murray*: If an Indian takes leave out of Burma he is included among the discharged, but if anybody takes leave in Burma he remains on the pay roll?—Yes, but a man is engaged in his place. When the man taking leave in Burma returns, his substitute is discharged. I have a statement for 1930 showing the whole thing, and in no case do the discharges for other reasons, leaving aside those taken as substitutes and as durwans, totalled together come to more than 1·4 per cent.

M-361. *The Chairman*: Could we have a revised statement in this new tabulation?—Yes.

M-362. What we are anxious to get is a picture, and I think in your own interests it would be useful to have a truer picture of these figures, and

the check on those figures is the number of new-comers you engaged in each month for last year, together with the number who were registered.

*Mr. Cliff*: From the point of view of the Company a man who has been away for 3 or 4 years would be a new man when he returns. It seems to me that the figures given by Mr. Webster now do give us a more accurate picture, than the figures previously submitted.

M-363. *Sir Alexander Murray*: I noticed the police here taking the finger prints of a lot of persons. Can you give us figures showing the new registrations and the old re-registrations: there are so many thousands of men being registered every year; how many of them do you actually engage?—In April there were 228 men who were finger printed by the police department and out of that number 39 were engaged by us.

M-364. That figure represents entirely new men who had never been on your books before?—That is so.

M-365. *Mr. Cliff*: With regard to the 228 men who were finger printed will you tell us whether they were all actually sent by you to the finger print bureau?—The figure 228 represents men who were sent by the different oil companies including ourselves.

M-366. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: What is the number you sent?—I think we sent about 150.

M-367. *Mr. Cliff*: It will be useful if you can give us the number of people you sent and the number you engaged?—We will endeavour to supply that information.

M-368. *Mr. Clow*: In the memorandum that your company have sent us there is a reference to exempted factories. What does that mean?—(*Mr. Hunter*). 'Exempted factories' refers particularly to factories in which the operation is essentially continuous, and there are certain provisions of the Factories Act which enable those operating such factories to obtain exemption in regard to working hours.

M-369. But "exemption" usually has reference to operatives and not to factories?—Yes, we obtain exemption for operatives. For instance, in our power station, one of the generators may suddenly go wrong, and on an occasion like that we have the right to call in the whole of the staff even though some of the men called in may have just gone home after a full shift; and we should be exempted from the rules for working hours in such an emergency.

M-370. You say "Except in the cases of exempted factories the hours worked per week are 48 hours". What are the ordinary hours of work in exempted factories? The normal working hours are the same, that is, six 8-hour shifts per week.

M-371. *Mr. Tait*: When an occasion arose such as a breakdown you might exceed the number of hours laid down in the Factories Act?—Yes.

M-372. *Mr. Clow*: That applies to all factories?—Yes.

M-373. *Sir Alexander Murray*. In your memorandum you say, "Exempting provisions and the use made of them relate to oil water

pump stations on the main pipe line, oil refineries and electric power stations". I presume the factory inspector, under the rules made by the Local Government, has given you certain exemptions which enable you to make your men work longer hours than they are ordinarily allowed to work. Ordinarily speaking they work 8 hours shift?—Yes.

M-374. *Mr. Clow* : The point is whether ordinarily the hours in the so-called exempted factories are the same as those in the non-exempted factories?—Yes, they are the same.

M-375. There are no statutory provisions here for a weekly holiday except in the factories?—I think not.

M-376. Do you anticipate any serious difficulty if statutory provision is made for a day of rest?—No serious difficulty. The people who are most likely to object will be the workers themselves.

M-377. You say that about 15 per cent. of the total employees work 7 days a week. Is that still true?—It is still approximately true.

M-378. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : What work do they do?—They work on rotary wells.

M-379. Is that work continuous?—Yes. I may say that in rotary work and in drilling work generally, although the men may be on duty for 56 hours in a week for a large percentage of the time, so long as things are going smoothly, they are not doing strenuous manual work. They are kept in reserve in case something happens.

M-380. *Mr. Clow* : What proportion of your men work 10 hours a day?—(*Mr. Webster*). The number is very small. On the 18th October there were 240 drillers; there were no well pullers, but there were about 300 rig builders. Roughly, the total was about 500—600.

M-381. Everybody who works 10 hours a day gets a short day on Saturday?—Yes. They work only 56 hours a week.

M-382. Save in emergencies, can you say that there is nobody in the oil-field who works more than 56 hours a week?—(*Mr. Hunter*). Yes, in the case of men engaged in manual labour. We have a limited number of durwans and oilmen whose duties are largely sedentary, who regularly remain on duty for 12 hours daily.

M-383. You refer to the display of safety posters, presumably in Burmese and other languages. Have these had much effect?—Not apparently.

M-384. In how many languages did you have these posters displayed? (*Mr. Webster*). In Telugu, in Burmese and in English.

M-385. Were you asked by the Local Government officers to put up vernacular notices relating to the Workmen's Compensation Act?—(*Mr. Hunter*). Yes. There was considerable correspondence about that recently.

M-386. *The Chairman* : Does the Labour Superintendent act as the advocate for the men in cases of accidents falling under the Workmen's Compensation Act?—He is responsible for making inquiries in all cases of accidents, and his duty is to see that the interests of workmen are fully guarded.

M-387. *Mr. Clow*: You had some objection to putting up these notices?—I should like to refresh my memory about the correspondence in that matter, but speaking from memory our main objection was that the notices which we were asked to post were incomplete and, in our view, created a false impression. The policy of my company in connection with compensation generally has been to act in the spirit of what subsequently became the Workmen's Compensation Act, and we have always adopted a policy of compensation in cases of accidents from as far back as I can remember. We did not start a compensation file until after the notifications began to appear about the Workmen's Compensation Act early in 1923. The first case on our compensation file is a case of a Burman who was killed in the power station in October 1922. His widow applied for compensation and she was paid compensation in January 1923 though the Act did not come into force until July 1924.

M-388. Since the Act came into force have you noticed any increase in the number of recorded accidents?—It is difficult to say because our own organisation for reporting accidents was not quite the same before as it is subsequent to that date. I have with me a record of the compensations paid from the 1st of July 1923, up to May 1924, i.e., before the Act was in force. In about 8 or 9 cases compensation was paid and the total amount of compensation was about Rs. 7,000.

M-389. In the first paragraph of your memorandum you refer to about 8,000 Burmans employed. Does that refer to all the fields under your control?—It refers to the main oil field areas up and down the river.

M-390. It does not include your concessions in other fields?—No.

M-391. What percentage of your workers in this field are skilled workers?—Roughly about 25 per cent.

M-392. Are the skilled men mainly recruited from the ranks of the unskilled, that is, is there a rise from one grade to another, or are they mainly recruited separately?—In the departments of drilling and production there is a regular scale for each gang. We have 3 or 4 men on the minimum pay and 2 or 3 on a slightly higher pay in different grades.

M-393. Have you any special facilities for training skilled workers?—No.

M-394. Ordinarily, what can a skilled labourer rise to?—In the drilling department he can rise to Rs. 175 a month *plus* the usual bonus.

M-395. Do you experience any difficulty in getting these special skilled men? Not at the moment.

M-396. *Sir Alexander Murray*: I notice you say in your memorandum that "the industrial efficiency of machinists, electricians and artisans generally is improved by education". Does that mean education before they become machinists or after they become machinists?—That is a statement arising from the fact that in the machine shops the men who have a better education acquire promotion more quickly than others.

M-397. You also say: "The industrial efficiency of the unskilled labourer would only be affected to the extent that it would make him a candidate for promotion to some capacity where he will no longer be classed as

unskilled." There again, do you refer to education before he becomes an unskilled workman?—That is the case because we have no facilities for giving adult education.

M-398. We were told by Mr. Webster yesterday that a night school was started here but it had to be given up as the workers did not take full advantage of it. It is natural that men are reluctant to attend night schools after their day work, but have you thought out the possibility of opening afternoon practical classes so that men who are off duty during the afternoon and who are desirous of becoming efficient workmen may take advantage of the course?—That has not been investigated.

M-399. Do you think it worth while exploring it?—I am prepared to go into that matter.

M-400. *Mr. Clow*: In the skilled ranks you have more Burmans than Indians?—Yes. We have Burmans in drilling work and production while Indians are mainly in machine shops.

M-401. If you take, for example, the average pay of the post held by the Burman you will find that it is higher than the average pay of the post held by the Indian?—On the average that is so.

M-402. The policy of the Company, I take it, is not to restrict particular posts to any one community?—Other things being equal, in Burma the Company's policy is to give preference to Burmans.

M-403. *Mr. Birla*: At present your total labour force is composed very nearly half of Indians and half of Burmans, and you said just now that other things being equal your policy for the future is to give preference to Burmans. You agree that there is a feeling growing against the importation of Indian labour into Burma now both for the personal safety of the Indian labour as well as to protect them against unemployment in future. Do you think it desirable that the Government should take some action to regulate the emigration of Indian labour to Burma?—In the past we have always had a number of unemployed Indians in this neighbourhood, and there is always a certain floating population of unemployed Indians in the Province. It seems impossible to overcome this altogether, but the problem has never assumed such proportions locally as to call for any special action. The Indians themselves adjust it in their own communities here to some extent and the Company gives some assistance. The Members of the Commission saw our big Indian barracks yesterday. Of those whom we house in that barracks about 10 per cent. are out of work at present. We help them to that extent.

M-404. But in view of your future policy you will agree that there is a likelihood of the volume of unemployment assuming a very large proportion; would you therefore suggest any official action to regulate the immigration of Indian labour into Burma?—The problem of unemployed Indians here is but a portion of the same problem for the Province as a whole, and in my opinion cannot be tackled from the point of view of the oil industry alone.

M-405. I think even on your field here there is a fair amount of unemployment prevailing among the Indian workers?—There is unemployment but there is no acute distress amongst these people.

M-406. What do you think is the total number of Indians unemployed at present on your field?—The numbers at present are somewhere in the neighbourhood of 1,000.

M-407. The total number of employed is about 9,000?—Yes, between 9,000 and 10,000.

M-408. As you know, people are attracted every year in the hope that they would be able to secure employment in the oil field. The oil fields had a tradition of absorbing large numbers of men every year from India. Now as the policy is getting in favour of employing more Burmans we must have a period of acute distress in the future?—There has been no appreciable decrease in the number or proportion of Indians that we normally employ. So far as can be seen at present, the Company's policy will not necessitate any marked reduction in future in the number of Indians for whom we provide employment. The classes of work which are done in the oil industry by Burmans and Indians are fairly distinct, and the reason why Indians obtain employment is because they do mainly unskilled work which the Burmans are not willing to do. For instance, the Burmans will not work as transport coolies or earth digging coolies.

M-409. Now I have been informed that the Burman is getting more accustomed to do that sort of work?—We find no evidence of this.

M-410. So you think you will have to rely on Indian labour for unskilled work for a very long time to come?—It is very difficult to see far ahead in the matter.

M-411. Have you considered the question whether Government should take any action to protect the Indian labour in respect of his employment and his personal safety?—We are prepared to co-operate with any scheme which Government considers necessary to deal with the problem for the Province as a whole.

M-412. Do you think that from the point of view of the Company as well as of your labour your Labour Bureau has been a great success?—Yes, that is my opinion.

M-413. Do you think that it commands the confidence of the labour to the extent to which a labour union could command?—That raises a somewhat difficult question, that is, the efficiency of institutions which are run entirely by Indian and Burman labour. These men, for the most part, lack education and they lack facilities and powers of organisation. If they could provide their own skilled superintendents there is no doubt that they could run their own labour union. Our view is that for the present they need considerable assistance.

M-414. Is it not natural for the labour to suspect certain institutions which are run entirely by the employers?—I think that the labour in our own employ taken as a whole recognize that our Labour Bureau is run to their benefit; they have confidence in it, and, in my opinion, they have no desire for an outside agency.

M-415. You had a strike in 1926 since the inauguration of the Labour Bureau, had you not?—Yes.

M-416. Could not the Labour Bureau foresee the circumstances leading to the strike and prevent it from developing?—It touches upon a somewhat large issue. Whereas our labour here in general is contented it is always possible when some special issue is raised—may be a national issue such as they raised recently in Rangoon—for the labour to take exceptional measures and to go on strike. The amount of confidence that the labour have in our Labour Superintendent weighs very little really with labour such as we have here, particularly with Burman labour, when for example a national issue is raised. The national issue carries everything before it.

M-417. But the strike of 1926 was not based on any national issue; it was based on some definite grievances, for instance, the collection of Thathameda tax?—Yes, that was one of the issues.

M-418. Another reason for the strike was the change over from monthly rates of pay to daily rates. These two issues at least, you will agree had nothing to do with any national movement; they were distinctly labour issues, and I wonder whether you have thought what attitude a properly constituted Labour Union would have taken under such circumstances, when there was a clash of interest between the employers and the employees?—It was one of the periods when a Labour Union was to some extent in existence.

M-419. May I know what attitude on these specific issues the Labour Union took *vis-a-vis* the attitude taken by your Labour Bureau?—That I cannot say. My Company has always been opposed to the deduction of the Thathameda tax by the Company.

M-420. *Sir Alexander Murray*: You and the labour union agreed on that point?—Yes.

M-421. *Mr. Birla*: But on the question of the change over from monthly rates of pay to daily rates, you did not agree?—The change over was merely a change in accounting; it was not a change in practice as far as the men were concerned.

M-422. But why did they object to that?—The men apparently considered it as a reduction in status. The idea abroad was that it was more honourable to be posted in the books of the company on a monthly wage than on a daily wage.

M-423. According to you it was a question of *amour propre*?—Largely. They received actually more pay on the daily rate than on the monthly rate. They had always been paid on the basis of the number of days worked, and it was easier to work out our pay sheets at say Re. 1-2-6 a day than to take a monthly rate, divide it by the number of days in the month, 28, 29, 30 or 31 and multiply it by the days worked.

*Mr. Birla*: I am afraid I do not agree that the workers could cause trouble simply for sentiments.

M-424. With such a good medical organization, why have you such a high infant mortality?—(*Mr. Webster*) The answer as given in our memorandum, where an attempt to combine figures for the two fields has been made, is not correct inasmuch as the system of registration of births

and deaths in Singu was not satisfactory. In Khodaung, for the whole of 1929, 125 children were born and the number of children who died under 1 year of age was 31 in the Company's barracks, that is, 248 per thousand. For the 8 months of 1930 the figure for Khodaung is 221 per thousand, for Singu 294 per thousand.

M-425. What is the total amount which you spend after education and other welfare work?—(*Mr. Hunter*) Our Labour Bureau organization including welfare and education costs the Company about Rs. 16,000 a month.

M-426. I would exclude the cost of maintaining the Labour Bureau. In the welfare work I will include educational institutions, clubs, etc., for recreation and medical arrangements including hospitals, doctors and nurses so far as they concern only your workers, but exclude the cost of medical arrangements for higher officers; could you give us an idea of the total amount you spend on such welfare work?—I could get those figures. I may say that the figure I gave just now does not include anything for medical expenses or treatment. The expenses for medical services run roughly to Rs. 20,000 a month, but there will be some difficulty in splitting that up and knowing where to draw the line between labour and, say, the clerical staff and European staff. Another item is that when labour is off sick they receive pay for the first 7 days, and that alone amounts to Rs. 3,000 to Rs. 4,000 a month.

M-427. *Miss Power*: How long has the present policy of the Company with regard to elementary education been in operation?—(*Mr. Webster*) The first school was opened in October 1925, the second in November 1925, the third in December 1925 and the fourth in the middle of 1926.

M-428. You say that the average daily attendance is nearly 76 per cent. of those on the school rolls. Do you include on the school rolls every child of school-going age?—No. We have included only those who have actually attended. When a child attends for the first time, his name is entered on the roll. Then if that child is absent from school for a month, his name is struck off the roll.

M-429. Could you give us figures showing what percentage of the children of school-going age in your area is on the school registers?—I should think it is somewhere about 75 per cent., but that is a guess.

M-430. Are they both Indian and Burman children?—There are very few Indian children.

M-431. A smaller percentage of the Indian children are reacting to your educational policy?—Yes.

M-432. Could you by any chance separate those figures for us?—There would be no difficulty as regards Burmans, but a considerable number of Indians in our employ live in villages, outside our control, and that applies to a certain extent to Burmans also. We have areas in which our schools deal with the children of that area only. As regards Indians, some of them come from somewhat long distances, probably about a mile, others come from quite near, and some live quite near but do not attend. In these circumstances reliable statistics embracing children living in village are unobtainable.

M-433. Is the attendance in the case of Indians and Burmans predominatingly from among the clerical and other skilled classes?—It is predominatingly from the labourers in both cases.

M-434. Do the children of the clerical workers go elsewhere?—They are frequently sent to Municipal or Anglo-Vernacular schools.

M-435. Is the curriculum at these schools entirely in the hands of the Company, or does the Government control it?—It is put up by the Company's school inspector and inspected and approved by the Government inspector who makes frequent visits.

M-436. Do you include hygiene?—Yes, as a compulsory subject.

M-437. In your memorandum you refer to the fact that wages are paid monthly. Have they always been paid monthly?—(*Mr. Hunter*) They have always been paid monthly.

M-438. Has there ever been a demand for them to be paid more frequently, say fortnightly?—Never. The question was once raised, not by the workers, but in a notification that came from the Central Government.

M-439. Have you any reason to believe that the Indian workers, when they first come here, incur an increasing volume of debt until they have been employed for a full month and have drawn full wages?—That seems unavoidable. But the question has never been raised in an acute form. We have never been approached by the workers themselves on that score.

M-440. The Union has never raised that point at all?—I would have to look that up, but I think not.

M-441. *Mr. Birla*: Is there any objection to the Company paying wages weekly?—It would involve a great deal of additional work. Our own view, after making enquiries on this particular point is that the workmen themselves do not desire it.

M-442. I quite see the inconvenience which it may cause to the Company but will it not be more than compensated for by the amount of relief that you could give to the workers—(*Mr. Webster*) The question was put at a meeting of some Burmans about 3 or 4 years ago, and they then expressed a desire for monthly payment, as their finances were arranged on a monthly basis.

M-443. *The Chairman*: Has that question been discussed by the Workers' Council?—I am under the impression that it arose before the Workers Council was formed.

M-444. It would be open to the Workers Council to discuss it?—(*Mr. Hunter*) Yes.

M-445. Have you any attachments made by the courts for debts which you are obliged to deduct from the pay of the workers?—They are frequent.

M-446. Could your pay office give us a statement of the number of attachments?—Certainly.

M-447. I understand there is a rule of the Company that any workman who has his pay attached is liable to dismissal. Is that so?—Yes.

M-448. But in spite of that you have a certain number of attachments made by the courts?—Yes. That regulation was inaugurated mainly in an effort to find a deterrent to people from getting into debt.

M-449. I take it from that that as employers you would like to see the power to attach wages entirely removed?—Very much so.

M-450. *Miss Power*: In your factories, have the working hours always been 8?—In our factories they have always been 8 hours.

M-451. Then you have no information on the subject of the effect of reduced hours on output in your factories—(*Mr. Webster*) No.

M-452. *Mr. Tait*: On the question of the institution of welfare officers and the Labour Bureau, I take it that it would be dependent on the size of the organization and the numerical strength of its staff, and further it would only be justified as a means of relieving executive officers of much of their routine work, such as housing and settling of internal disputes between the various people?—(*Mr. Hunter*) I think the evidence which is open to any one visiting a neighbourhood such as this, where we have one big organization and other smaller organizations confirms that view. In a smaller organization it is possible for the executive officers, in the ordinary routine of their work to maintain a more personal contact with their men and they can fulfil the objects of a Labour Bureau in a larger organization, because there is more of a family feeling in their concerns, which becomes impossible after an organization outsteps a certain size.

M-453. *Mr. Cliff*: Does that mean that the policy pursued by your Company in relation to the creation of facilities for education, medical relief, etc., and the work of Labour Bureau generally is not the same in form in a smaller organization, although the same policy would be carried through there also?—So far as is possible.

M-454. You believe in the provision of educational and hospital facilities?—Certainly.

M-455. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: By the employer?—That depends.

M-456. *The Chairman*: It is a matter of proportion, I suppose?—Yes. A parallel case is the provision of police protection. It is a question how far it is the duty of the employers and how far the duty of the local Government to provide it. It is easy to argue that police should be provided out of the taxes paid by the Company; similarly with regard to hospital facilities.

M-457. *Mr. Tait*: While it is the policy of the Burmah Oil Company to open schools and do other welfare work for their employees I take it you do not agree that it is a responsibility on the Company to relieve Government of duties which obviously Government must perform?—My Company's policy has to some extent been to follow the line of least resistance with the Government. We have tried to induce Government to accept the view that, for instance, the provision of police is a Government responsibility. But Government pleads poverty, and we must have the protection in our own interests, and so the Company pays the piper to a large extent.

M-458. When you were speaking of *durwans*, did you mean the police?—(*Mr. Webster*) I meant watchmen.

M-459. On the question of minimum wages, you say that you would deprecate legislation or any other means which aim at an arbitrary fixation of rates independent of the natural economic factors which must ultimately control them. I take it you would agree that there are other considerations which must weigh, *viz.*, the cost of living in different provinces and the standard of living in different districts in a Province. For instance, you would not consider that a minimum wage in Yenangaung, where the cost of living is higher than in Syriam, would be an equitable minimum for Syriam?—*(Mr. Hunter)* That is all included in the economic factors. They would all have to be weighed and considered.

M-460. You refer to economic factors such as the supply of workers available and the employer's ability to pay. You would want to add these factors also?—Yes. Under the condition of the industry, it is possible to visualize a time when the industry will reach a stage when the scale of remuneration paid to workers at present will be no longer possible. It will be a question of choosing between some lower scale of remuneration to the workers or closing the industry. That is a possibility of the future.

M-461. Even assuming that the industry was in a position to pay a higher scale of wages, nevertheless it would be wrong in principle to fix a minimum generally for India and Burma that would be applicable equally to, say, Madras and Yenangaung?—Certainly.

M-462. The average Indian workman in your employment here goes on a holiday for six months in a period of 2 or 3 years. It follows that, compared with the ordinary worker in the United Kingdom, comparatively few of whom are in a position to take six months holiday every 2 or 3 years, the standard of wages here is considerably higher than the standard of wages in England for instance?—I do not think I am in a position to answer that.

M-463. Was it your experience that the limitation of working hours under the Factories Act was definitely unpopular amongst the workmen, and do you think that any further restriction of hours would be misunderstood and strongly resented?—It has been our experience that any restriction of hours for the workmen has been unpopular with the workmen themselves.

M-464. *Mr. Clow*: Even if they get the same pay?—Not if they get the same pay for 8 hours as they get for 10 hours.

M-465. *Mr. Tait*: I think it would have to be assumed that they could not get for 8 hours the same pay as they get for 10 hours. Would it not then entail a hardship to that extent?—Yes.

M-466. *U Aye Maung*: In regard to training of subordinates you say that several Burmans are now taking on work originally done by Americans, though only in one case has one been found capable of being placed in charge of even a small field. Has any other Burman been tried and found incapable of taking charge of a small oilfield?—The difficulty there has been to obtain recruits. This is a matter in which I was personally very much involved and interested. In 1925 and 1926, we had considerable negotiations with the Superintendent of the Government High School in Rangoon, with a view to recruiting a better class of educated Burman whom we could train and teach the business of oil drilling from the ground work up. Professor French was up here on more

than one occasion and brought some scholars to show them round the place. At first he was sanguine of success, and he was very keen that we should adopt a scheme of training. The idea was that we should establish a hostel here for these students and have training classes. The matter was gone into very fully and all that remained to take the next step and establish the hostel was to find the necessary students from Rangoon. But after considerable delay, and I believe, considerable tribulation on the part of Mr. French, he had to advise us that he had come to the conclusion that the men that we sought were not available and the whole scheme fell through. We have tried to get men locally, but there is only one man who has gone through the mill as far as the training is concerned, and he is a particularly creditable case. He is the son of a local Twinsa. He had been at school in Mandalay and reached a fairly high standard. He decided, after some interviews with me, to get down to it and learn the business. Matters were made as easy as possible for him by giving him his training in out-fields where he was not known to the Burmans in the neighbourhood. He persevered and qualified as headman on drilling work. For some years he has been in charge of our producing operations on our Minbu field. He is now in these fields, taking a refresher course, to consolidate some of his earlier training. I would only be too glad if I could find more men who would come forward and get down to the mastery of the manual work, which is essential and which all our own Britishers under training have to do.

M-467. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : You want a highly educated man for it?—No. At that time, we wished to put Burmans into some of the higher posts. There were two lines of action. One was to engage and train Burmans of the better class with higher education, and the other was to endeavour to educate the drilling cooly here who eventually becomes more or less expert in the manipulation of the tools on the well. We tried both. Our night classes already referred to were mainly to educate the skilled operator of drilling tools. We have had to admit failure in both cases.

M-468. What is the educational qualification needed?—High school, 9th to 10th standard would probably be sufficient.

M-469. Do you not send any students to the School of Mines?—No.

M-470. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Did not your Company contribute a large sum for establishing an engineering school?—When the new Rangoon University was being built, my Company made a donation of £100,000 for a school of technical engineering.

M-471. Have they not trained any men yet?—There are a certain number of students who go through the college in Rangoon and some have been accepted as apprentices in our refineries in Rangoon. There again the supply is small.

M-472. *U Hla Bu* : Regarding the training of Burmans for more responsible positions in the oilfields, you consulted Mr. French in 1925 and 1926. That was before the establishment of the present University?—Yes.

M-473. Do you know that there are many graduates from the University who are seeking appointments even on Rs. 100 a month?—We have not made further advances to the University authorities since its development has taken place.

M-474. If any Burmese Society were to send down to you some University students for appointment as drillers or to other responsible positions, would you be prepared to engage them on living wages suitable to their standard of education?—We are prepared to consider the whole question again if it seems likely that a supply of suitable candidates will be available.

M-475. With regard to workmen's compensation, who certifies as to the extent of the injury in cases of accidents?—The procedure in cases of accidents is that a report is made first of all by the officer in charge on the spot where the accident takes place. The man is examined by our nearest doctor and treated, if necessary, in the hospital. Eventually when he is discharged a report comes from the Principal Medical Officer in the fields who may consult the other doctors that have attended on the man. He assesses the percentage of the man's disability. In some cases the percentage is laid down in the Act, but there are many cases which are not covered exactly and in such cases our own Medical Officer makes his estimate of the amount of disability. Very often it is a matter of extreme difficulty, because the nature of the injury may be such that when a man is discharged from hospital his disability may be, say, 30 per cent. of his effective powers of work but that within a course of time, say, within two or three months, it may be considerably reduced. It is on questions like that that a difference of opinion is possible. We put up the estimate which is given by our own Medical Officer who assesses the amount of disability after allowing for a reasonable period of convalescence.

M-476. Was there any occasion in which there was a difference of opinion between your Medical Officer and the Government Medical Officer in regard to the extent of the injury?—There has been only one occasion since we adopted the policy of paying compensation on which our own Medical Officer's opinion was not accepted and was the subject of a further inquiry. In that case there was an enquiry by the Commissioner and the Civil Surgeon was called in. His opinion differed from that of our own Medical Officer and the amount of compensation which had been assessed by our Medical Officer was increased when the case was revised.

M-477. You said that in your register there were about 500 men waiting for employment. In view of this large number of unemployed, do you still consider it necessary to keep the register open?—The names on our register are constantly changing, and we consider it advisable to keep it open in order to give the applicants for employment a fair treatment. We cannot satisfy everybody and we have got to devise a system which will give the fairest possible treatment to the largest number.

M-478. Do you not think that the maintenance of such a register encourages unemployment? If you do not keep the register open, are not people likely to go away from the fields and seek work elsewhere?—It depends upon the individual's temperament. It is possible in some cases that the men would wait for the chance of getting employment in our company rather than go elsewhere. If they know that their name is fairly high up in the register they will possibly refuse employment elsewhere. I do not think that unemployment as a whole can be increased by the fact that we register more men than we can employ.

M-479. Instead of keeping the register open for those who seek employment, will it not be convenient from the point of view of the men if you were to call for applications for appointment as and when vacancies occur?—It will certainly cause inconvenience. There are always these men seeking employment and our system of keeping the register open is to enable them to register themselves for appointment. After they are registered they are classified in reference to their records of work, if any. When a vacancy occurs it is a simple matter to go to the register and select the man.

M-480. But suppose a man who is high up in the register and has a prior claim over others is not present in the morning when the names are called but comes only in the evening, he loses his chance. My point is whether you cannot give notice to such a man if a vacancy occurs?—(Mr. Webster) As far as skilled men are concerned we send for them. But in the case of unskilled men their names are merely called. We can alter the present practice and fix some particular time in which the men should be present. We tried the system at Singu for a short time of engaging men between the hours of 9 and 10 with the object of giving half a day for those men who wanted to go in for stone-breaking and work of that kind if they had a chance.

M-481. I believe you have an intelligence clerk attached to the office of the Labour Superintendent?—(Mr. Hunter) Yes. I think that in nearly all large organizations it has been found necessary or advisable to have some means of obtaining information regarding conditions generally including the workmen. This man has no special powers or protection from the company.

M-482. If the intelligence clerk makes a report, the Labour Superintendent has to act on that report?—No. May I ask whether the suggestion in the question is that the intelligence clerk brings information against a man and the man is dealt with?

M-483. It may be against a man or it may be in favour of a man. But is it not a fact that the Labour Superintendent acts on the report of the intelligence clerk?—Certainly not.

M-484. *U Aye Maung*: Our information is that the intelligence clerk acts as a detective?—This intelligence officer's duties are mainly concerned with information concerning movements that are going on outside our own workers. But there has not been a single case since we had our Labour Bureau where a man in our own employ has been dismissed or has been dealt with in a disciplinary manner as a result of the information provided by this intelligence officer. I may say that this man moves freely and has no special protection; he is not unwelcome, as far as I know. He not only moves about freely but he is well known to all the people.

M-485. *The Chairman*: He is what the Government of India call an Information Officer?—Yes. He attends meetings organized by political agitators and others because it may be that some questions arise which will affect labour generally. He has at times given us information which in due course has been received from official sources. No complaints about our Information Officer have reached me from our own workmen.

M-486. *U Hla Bu*: Can you tell us how often your Workers Council meets?—(Mr. Webster) The original council used to meet monthly, but as

the members saw that there was not much to talk about monthly they considered their meeting together four times a year as sufficient. It used to meet once in every three months more or less regularly, but it could always summon more meetings on the suggestion of individual members, and as a matter of fact this was done once or twice. The new elected Council came into being while I was away, and I have not yet met them.

M-487. It is said in the memorandum that the Labour Superintendent is the president of the Workers Council. I presume the Labour Superintendent decides what proposals should be put forward?—(*Mr. Hunter*) As I said previously, our Labour Superintendent as President of that Council is there to guide the Council with regard to the manner in which its proposals and recommendations are to be put up to the Company. He is not there to decide matters. The Council itself has a free vote and can give its own decision by vote on proposals which it puts forward. For the information of the Commission I will read the minutes of the meeting of the Workers Council (Burmese section) held on the 10th of September this year. “*Mg. Khin of Beme* asked if the Company would engage more Burmans in all departments except pooling. *Mg. Moe of Yagyipin* asked if the Company would carry out more of their construction work with Burmans and cut out contractors as much as possible. The Labour Superintendent said that it was a question of getting the work done in the cheapest way possible, and it was doubtful if the proposition put forward would work especially in view of the lack of adequate supervision. *Mg. Moe* asked if at least it could be given a trial.”

M-488. *The Chairman*: May we have one of those put in?—Yes.

M-489. *U Hla Bu*: You say in your memorandum that as at August 31st 1929 housing was provided for 9,205 of your employees or 53 per cent. of the number employed. Will you tell us when you will be able to provide quarters for the remainder?—The policy of the Company is to provide housing up to the percentage which is likely to be applied for and used by that personnel which they consider to be an economic minimum eventually. What I mean to say is that we have to take into account the fluctuations. We cannot say that we shall have permanent employment always for so many thousand men. There must be a margin, and we can take the eventual minimum to be somewhere in the neighbourhood of, say, 80 per cent. of the current pay roll. Of that 80 per cent. again there will always be a percentage of employees who do not desire Company housing and who prefer to live in villages or in their own houses. Deducting both these quantities the remainder will eventually be provided for. We have had set-backs at times in our housing problem. There was a period when a new village, Ywathitgone, was built and for several months half the houses there stood empty, because the men preferred to live in their villages. We are now watching the situation closely, and as genuine demand for further housing arises it will be met.

M-490. *Mr. Tyabji*: Can you tell us the number of employees under the regulated, non-regulated and exempted establishments?—We can put those figures in; we have not got them here.

M-491. Can you not tell us how many accidents took place in regulated establishments, how many in non-regulated and how many in exempted establishments?—These distinctions are technical distinctions under the Local

Government's regulation, but in practice we make no distinction ; we treat them all alike.

M-492. But you know exactly where the accidents have taken place and therefore you can tabulate them very easily under the different headings ?—That has already been done in our memorandum.

M-493. The figures given refer to different years. Can you give us the figures for 1929 ?—Yes.

M-494. I take it that you have several departments which are interested in the manner in which an accident occurs ?—In the first place, it is the concern of the department in which it takes place.

M-495. You have an insurance department and a welfare department, is it not ?—The insurance department takes no account of the accident at the time. It is purely an accounting department.

M-496. Does your welfare department take any account ?—(*Mr. Webster*) The welfare department enquires into the cause of the accident and brings it to the notice of the Agent if it is due to any great carelessness on the part of the workman. If it is a serious accident it is reported to the warden. All accidents are enquired into, and we go on the principle that if a thing falls and hits a man on the shoulder and does not cause any serious injury, the same thing, if it had fallen a foot the other way, might have been fatal ; we therefore see how such accidents could be prevented.

M-497. You enquire into the accident, I suppose, with the engineers or the superintendents who are in charge of the particular department in which the accident took place ?—Yes.

M-498. Can you give us a note giving the suggestions that were put forward for the prevention in future of, say, a fatal accident ?—Yes, we can do that.

M-499. You employ contractors, I think, for the purpose of erecting tanks or dismantling them ?—(*Mr. Hunter*) Yes.

M-500. There have been a certain number of accidents in the work of erecting and dismantling tanks, and the accidents, I take it, have been fatal in some cases ?—(*Mr. Marr Grieve*) So far as I know there has been only one fatal case.

M-501. What sort of supervision do you exercise over these contractors ?—They come under the control of the Chief Engineer of the field or one of his assistant European subordinates.

M-502. If a fatal accident occurs in the process of putting up a tank or dismantling it, what procedure do you adopt to find out as to who is responsible for the accident ?—(*Mr. Hunter*) We hold an enquiry just as we would if we had an accident in one of our own departments and endeavour to find out the circumstances of the accident.

M-503. Can you tell us whether in any of the enquiries you have made in connection with these accidents you found that the reason for the accident was due to the negligence on the part of the superior officers in charge of the contract work ?—In contract work we have practically no experience of accidents.

M-504. But you said there was one accident?—(*Mr. Marr Grieve*) One of the clauses in the contract is that the contractor must have on the spot a reliable *maistry*. (*Mr. Hunter*) In all contracts for work of the nature referred to by you there is a clause under which the contractor himself is responsible for any compensation that may have to be paid to his workmen as a result of an accident. What the Company does is this: We have our own staff of engineers who visit the scenes of operation frequently, and it is their duty to see that such precautions as are normally taken by ourselves are taken by the contractor. I think the reason why we have been immune from accidents in contract work is the efficient nature of the supervision which the Company exercises. We have no experience really of these accidents in contract work. There was one case in 1924 when a man was killed in Chauk.

M-505. Is any step taken to find out whether there has been any negligence on the part of any person when a fatal or a very serious accident occurs?—Yes; a regular enquiry is instituted for each accident.

M-506. Did the enquiry in any case show that the accident was due to the negligence on the part of your superior officers or superintendents?—There have been cases in which subordinates and *mistries* have disregarded instructions thereby causing accidents.

M-507. What do you do in such cases?—Such men are dealt with as the Company considers is adequate to deter them from a repetition of the offence.

M-508. *The Chairman*: You take disciplinary action in accordance with the offence?—Yes.

M-509. I suppose it may vary from a reprimand to dismissal?—Yes. We cannot cut out entirely the human element and the liability to make mistakes.

M-510. *Mr. Tyabji*: In your memorandum you say that in cases where large firms like yours insure internally their risks under the Workmen's Compensation Act, there should be no question of insurance outside?—We consider that there is no need for legislation in the circumstances mentioned.

M-511. Do you not think that if you insure internally with your own firm, the firm may reasonably give a deposit to Government just as the other insurance companies do?—I do not consider that is necessary.

M-512. *The Chairman*: Would not the employee get more liberal treatment from the Company which does its own insurance than if the case had to be fought with an ordinary outside insurance company?—He is covered by the Act. Compensation must be paid through the local Commissioner for the Act.

M-513. If a case goes to a court of law, the real defendant is the insurance company where you are insured. Experience shows that the workman gets worse treatment where he is dealing with an insurance company than where he is dealing with the employer direct?—My own view is that that would be the case here.

M-514. If you put your insurance into the hands of a company, they have their profits and dividends to make, and it is their business to fight for the letter of the law, whereas you can administer the spirit more than the letter. Is that the case?—Yes.

M-515. *Mr. Tyabji*: Has the number of fatal and permanent disablement accidents been rather heavy in the Yenangaung fields?—I think not. It is very difficult to draw a comparison between the work here and work in any other industry. There is no other industry quite like it. Here we are dealing with complicated and heavy machinery and, so far as I am aware, compared with other industries in India, the liability to accidents is probably greater. How our percentage of accidents to workers compares with other industries I do not know.

M-516. It works out at 1·89 per 1000 for fatal and 5·18 per 1000 for permanent disablement. These are taken from the figures under the Workmen's Compensation Act. Your total is not known?—The total can be deduced from those figures.

M-517. Is there any report published by Government on the oil fields of Burma, giving the statistics of employment and accidents other than those under the Factories or Workmen's Compensation Act?—I know of none.

M-518. So that, there is no possibility of knowing the number of persons employed in the oil fields or the accidents which take place?—We are prepared to furnish that information. All serious accidents are reported to the Warden.

M-519. Is it a fact that in your works when a man officiates in a higher grade, you very often do not give him the officiating pay?—(*Mr. Webster*) In all cases of workers, we do so. (*Mr. Hunter*) In all cases of labour, we do so.

M-520. I am told that in one of your workshops you had a man working on about Rs. 275 a month and another on Rs. 100 a month officiated for him but got only Rs. 100 a month?—(*Mr. Webster*) The organization of the machine shops is that there is one European per shift with one Burman or Indian supervisor under him. It is possible that in this particular case the European might have gone on leave temporarily, and the man working in his place may have considered that he should have a part of the pay of the European. I do not, however, know of any workman or supervisor in the machine shops getting Rs. 275 a month. (*Mr. Hunter*) In actual practice, if the second man takes the place of the head man, he gets the pay of the particular job.

M-521. Would you agree to the Mahomedan workmen getting 2 hour for prayer every Friday?

*The Chairman*: Has it ever been asked for?—(*Mr. Webster*) It was asked for about two years ago, and put up to the Company at the time. It was not granted. (*Mr. Hunter*) With eight hour shifts, it would be difficult to grant that facility. The men have the remaining 16 hours of the day in which to offer their prayers.

M-522. *Colonel Russell*: In your memorandum you give details of a large medical staff, but you do not give details with regard to the public health control of your Company's area. Who does that?—(*Dr. Terry*) There is no public health control that I am aware of.

M-523. Who controls conservancy and sanitation?—Our own doctors.

M-524. The doctors you have engaged in the hospitals ?—Our own medical staff. They have their own organization, and they detail special men for that work.

M-525. Have they got the time to do dispensary and hospital work and public health work in addition ?—They have to make the time.

M-526. Have you got any subordinates like sanitary inspectors employed in your Company's area ?—There are no sanitary inspectors now.

M-527. Has the appointment of sanitary inspectors ever been considered ?—Yes. We had one about a year ago, but he was not satisfactory.

M-528. Then the whole thing is now left to your Medical Officers ?—Yes. (*Mr. Hunter*) We have men working under the supervision of our Medical Officers who do the work usually done by sanitary inspectors.

M-529. What is the general relationship of the Company to a municipality like that of Yenangyaung, where you have a large number of employees working, and what is the relationship of the Company to the district authorities as regards public health administration ? They do not assist you, and you do not associate with them at all ?—(*Dr. Terry*) No.

M-530. You are responsible for the health and sanitation of the whole of the area ?—We are not really. We do a certain amount of sanitation work.

M-531. As regards your own area ?—(*Mr. Hunter*) We attend to that ourselves.

M-532. There is no question of the local authorities, either municipal or district board, having any co-operation with the Company in its control of public health ?—I may say there is a difference between this area and the Chauk area. In the Chauk area with which we are concerned, there is the Chauk Town Council, in which we have representation, and our doctors are on that Council. So, for practical purposes, the sanitation and hygiene in the Chauk Town Council area is under the control of our medical officers.

M-533. That has never been attempted in Yenangyaung ?—No.

M-534. Would it be possible, or would it be looked on with favour ?—We cannot tackle Yenangyaung Town.

M-535. Could Mr. Webster give us the figures of infant mortality for the municipality of Yenangyaung ?—(*Mr. Webster*) Chauk was mentioned, not Yenangyaung. For the whole of Chauk, in 1928 the infantile mortality was 712·33 per 1000. In Chauk B. O. C. barracks and quarters in 1930 the figure is 290 odd per thousand.

M-536. I take it that a figure like 712 means really that a great number of births are not being registered ?—Yes.

M-537. *Mr. Cliff*: Was the death rate worse in relation to the municipality ?—Yes. (*Mr. Webster*) The figure for the same period is 340 per 1000. It is from the same Government report.

M-538. Your infantile mortality being about 248 per 1000, has the question of child welfare organization been ever taken up by the Company to try to reduce this high rate ?—The proposal was put forward last year that we should

start some infant welfare organization by engaging a Burmese doctor and Burmese nurses to concentrate on that and the treatment of other diseases. That was just before I went home. I know the treatment of other diseases has been agreed to, but I do not know the position as regards child welfare movement.

M-539. *Colonel Russell* : Has it ever been considered necessary to have a woman medical officer on your medical staff ?—(*Dr. Terry*) No.

M-540. Do you think there would be any work for her to do if there was one appointed ?—I think nurses would be the best.

M-541. Would a nurse be enough to develop work like maternity relief and child welfare ?—I think a nurse should be sufficient. A woman medical officer would not be necessary.

M-542. You say that water is available from stand pipes for 24 hours a day. Going round some of the lines yesterday, we saw that there were a number of water tubs in the houses. If there are stand pipes what is the necessity for water tubs ?—(*Mr. Webster*) Although the pipes run underground, in the hot weather the water coming from the stand pipes is so hot that it is not fit for drinking. The second reason is that it is for fire protection. The quarters are all made of matting, and the men themselves have placed the tubs there. Their excuse is that, in the event of a fire, they would not be able to get sufficient water from the running water tap to extinguish even a small outbreak of fire. Fire services have been put in these barracks, but even a tap of water on the spot is not going to be of much use as the material out of which the barracks are built is very inflammable.

M-543. It may not be so safe from the health point of view ?—From the point of view of the workers, it is going to be very difficult in actual practice to remove them.

M-544. You say there is no industrial disease. Have you had any cases of oil dermatitis among the sick ?—(*Dr. Terry*) One or two.

M-545. Could you say how many cases you have had during the last two years ?—No.

M-546. Could you give us approximately the number of cases you have seen ?—Five, during the last 3 years.

M-547. *The Chairman* : In your hospital records you will have information regarding the nature of your cases. Could you send to us the number of cases of oil dermatitis and any other form of industrial disease that you have had for the last 3 years in the oil field ?—Yes.

M-548. *Mr. Cliff* : In your answers to questions by the Chairman, with regard to the attitude and the relationship of the Company to trade unions, you used a phrase something like this : "in dealing with the beginnings of a representative organization". May I take that to mean that the Company would be sympathetic and would be prepared to treat with the beginnings of a representative organization ?—(*Mr. Hunter*) We have done so.

M-549. Are you still prepared to do so ?—Yes.

M-550. Is it one of the objects of the Workers Councils that they should deal with matters arising out of employment, *viz.*, work under certain terms

and conditions, pay, hours of work and so on? Can the Workers Councils deal with matters of that kind?—There is no restriction at all on such matters being discussed by them.

M-551. Matters of that kind are common to all workers. You have apparently formed Workers Councils on a racial basis. Does not that prevent common action and common representation?—If and when these councils show any desire to work together and it is possible for them to work together satisfactorily, the Company would put no obstacles in the way of their doing so.

M-552. What is the obstacle to start Workers Councils common to both races?—(*Mr. Webster*) The obstacle is the translation of the proceedings into Ooriya, Telugu, Hindustani, Burmese, and making the people with different languages understand one another.

M-553. You have heard what Mr. Hunter has said, that the Labour Superintendent must be the voice of the workpeople?—Yes. Actually, we had quite a successful sports meeting last year at which we had a mixed committee of Burmans and Indians, but we had a most harassing time getting things from one side to the other. It would have been very much easier with separate committees for each race.

M-554. That surely adds to the spice of life. Is there no more fundamental objection than that?—No.

M-555. Is not such a proposal worth considering?—(*Mr. Hunter*) I think the men's own feelings have to be considered, and we desire them to develop their own councils themselves.

M-556. You stated this morning that your Labour Bureau have been successful. Is it the intention of the Company to extend them to other places?—We are doing so. At the moment the Assam Oil Company has a Labour Superintendent at Digboi who was trained here, and he has been inaugurating a Bureau there on the same lines as here. At the same time, only yesterday I have received a long letter from the distributing organization of the Company in India putting up schemes for co-operative stores for employees of the Burma Shell Oil Storage and Distributing Company, primarily in Madras and eventually in Calcutta and Bombay. The whole scheme has been put up to us for comment and advice. In April last year, three assistants of the Burma Shell Co., one from Bombay, one from Madras and one from Calcutta came here for 2½ months for training. Their idea also is to inaugurate at their principal centres of employment, organizations run on lines which are basically the same as ours.

M-557. May the Commission take it that your experience of the welfare and medical work is sufficiently satisfactory to justify its extension to the other spheres of activity covered by the Company?—That is our opinion.

M-558. With regard to employment, down at the Labour Bureau this morning we saw quite a number of people knocking about, and I wondered whether it was not possible for the Company to register a reserve sufficient to meet its requirements. You seem to be registering more men than are necessary to meet your requirements. Could you not register just what is sufficient to meet your requirements?—As I said before, our policy has been the result of an effort to deal out what we consider to be the fairest treatment

for the largest number, but we are prepared to consider recommendations and ideas.

M-559. I was wondering whether you were not in fact holding out an inducement to the people who would have to wait relatively a long time before they got employment, an inducement which is not fair to them?—I think the only answer I can give is that ultimately the number of jobs available up here is the same, and although individuals may miss opportunities because they are on our waiting list and may prefer to remain on it rather than accept immediate employment elsewhere, some one else gets the job available, and the ultimate total amount of unemployment is not affected by the fact that we do keep a register open.

M-560. But you are apparently holding a number of people here. Take one case. A man comes up here, because he is frightened by the riots in Rangoon. He is a new man. He has been some time here, and it seems that it would be better in the interest of the Company and in the interest of the man to tell him that there is no opportunity of work here?—They can ascertain when they register what the chances of employment are. If a man who is off the register comes on now, he knows fairly well that, in the normal course of events, it would be six months probably before he gets a job.

M-561. Would it not be better to reduce the number, and not register so many men as you are at present registering?—I think possibly it would, and will consider this aspect further.

M-562. On the question of leave, is it not possible to arrange some system whereby the men whose pay is below Rs. 34 may be given a period of leave so that they can be sure of resuming their old position after return from leave?—That is a matter which I am prepared to investigate. There are considerable difficulties mainly of organization, but I shall look into them and see to what extent they can be overcome.

M-563. *Mr. Ahmed*. The Honorary Secretary of the Burma Labour Union was examined yesterday and he told us that his union had some correspondence with the management. Will you please enlighten us as to what that is about?—A letter was received just before the arrival of the Commission asking whether certain specified men could be granted leave of absence from work to enable them to give evidence before the Commission to which we replied in the affirmative.

M-564. Was there no other correspondence between you and the Union?—*(Mr. Webster)* We have had correspondence with the Labour Union at different times going back to November 1922, and we cannot tell you at the moment all the answers that were sent to their letters.

M-565. Your present attitude towards the Labour Union is one of sympathy I take it?—*(Mr. Hunter)* We are prepared to deal with them sympathetically and to co-operate with them always subject to the proviso that we must be satisfied that the Labour Union is representative of labour.

M-566. You mean that it should not be mingled up with politics?—We have an instance here where a man comes forward and says that he is the

secretary of a Labour Union, but there is no evidence to show that there has been any meeting of any section of labour at which he was appointed secretary.

M-567. In view of the fact that one of those who appeared before us as representing the Labour Union is a member of your Workers Council, I hope you will have no objection to consider the grievances put forward by the Union?—I would only deal with each case as it came up, and I do not admit that because one member of the Workers Council may have been present that that is any evidence that the Labour Union is representative of local labour.

M-568. You are not willing to recognize this Union even if it was recognized by the All-India Trade Union Congress?—I have already said that if we get a properly constituted and representative Labour union locally we are prepared to recognize it.

M-569. Are you not prepared to give recognition to the Union even though the All-India Trade Union Congress recognizes it?—I would require to be satisfied that the All-India Trade Union Congress was a properly constituted body.

M-570. Take it from me that the Government recognize the All-India Trade Union Congress?—If the Government recognize it then we would also recognize it.

M-571. My friend Mr. Tyabji raised the question of giving Muhammadan employees 2 hours off on Fridays for prayers. You might be aware that even in the Indian Legislature and the Provincial Legislatures about 1½ hours are given for this purpose. Can you not follow a similar practice here?—I fear that such action might possibly prejudice the chances of the members of that particular religion for employment with the Company.

M-572. You have said in your memorandum that you give them a certain number of holidays. Supposing the Muhammadan workers say that in lieu of the two hours they will be taking on Fridays they are prepared to forego a corresponding number of holidays, will you be prepared to grant them this concession?—If our workmen themselves would agree to that I would personally have no objection.

M-573. On an average your unskilled labourer gets Rs. 27 a month. I understand that the cost of living in these parts is slightly higher than it is in India and that it costs about Rs. 15 to 20 for his food expenses here?—There are messes in the barracks, and in some of them it is as low as Rs. 7 a month.

M-574. Is it not a fact that because he does not get a living wage he is compelled to join such messes where more than 40 or 50 men huddle together?—That is his own arrangement, and we find in this huddling together in messes there are men who are earning Rs. 27 a month and also men who are drawing Rs. 50 or 60. That is what he likes and he considers it adequate for himself.

M-575. *The Chairman*: And thereby he is able to send more money to his country?—Yes. The cost of the mess for a man comes to anything between Rs. 7 and 12.

M-576. *Mr. Ahmed*: I hope you will agree with me that it is because of his indebtedness he has to live in such a poor way?—No. I would refer you to the Government statistics which have just been published.

M-577. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : You mentioned that you have some workers working 10 hours a day. Is it not a fact that outside your firm there are men working even 12 hours a day in this field ?—I really do not know that.

M-578. Do you give compensation even to those classes of men who do not come under the Workmen's Compensation Act ?—We have always done that.

M-579. *The Chairman* : We were told by the Labour Union representatives yesterday that the charge for rice was Rs. 15 in the profit sharing shop, while it was only Rs. 13 in the bazaar ?—(*Mr. Webster*) I cannot say to which months it referred, but I do not think it is true. So much depends upon the quality of the rice. You can have a certain class of rice selling at Rs. 15 in the bazaar, a certain class at Rs. 13 or Rs. 12 and so on. There are many kinds of rice, and I do not know which class of rice in the profit sharing stores was compared with that in the bazaar.

M-580. I take it that your turn-over of rice is a large one ?—Our turn-over is about 3,000 bags a month, or 300 tons.

M-581. Therefore they will not come and buy in the stores unless they consider that either the price or the quality is to their advantage ?—Every man is a free agent in the matter. The only difference between the profit sharing stores and the bazaar is that the profit sharing stores sells on credit against a man's pay. He has a coupon book and in that he writes that he wants so much stores—it may be rice, may be kerosene oil, clothes or other commodities. He can buy up to the limit of the wages due to him.

M-582. All the profit made is shared out ; is that in proportion to the purchases made by individuals or in proportion to the number of members ?—It is shared out in proportion to the purchases. Supposing a man purchases 200 Rs. worth of goods in a year and the profit sharing stores declares a dividend of 10 per cent., that man will receive Rs. 20 as his share of the profit.

M-583. Therefore whatever you charge above the cost price it comes back to him in proportion to his purchases ?—Actually more, because the Company supplies kerosene oil to the stores at a concession rate which is below the market rate and the stores sells it at the market rate.

M-584. What happens to a member of the profit sharing stores in case of his return to his country and there is a balance to his credit ?—He invariably authorizes somebody in the field to draw the amount on his behalf. In some cases he writes to us to send the amount of his dividend to his address in his country, which is done.

M-585. These members really have some pretty close knowledge of the principles of co-operation. They know that they have to claim dividends ?—Yes. There is very little left unclaimed.

(The witnesses withdrew.)

**Mr. E. G. PATTLE, I.C.S., Warden, Burma Oil Fields, Yenangyaung.**

M-586. *The Chairman* : What is the area of your jurisdiction ?—The jurisdiction under the Oil Fields Act extends to the Yenanna and Padaukpin

oilfields which are very small areas ; it extends to the Minbu oilfield which is above and below Minbu town and is several miles long ; to the Yenangyat oilfield which is also rather a large area, the Chauk oilfield which contains the whole of the Sale township, and the area over the river known as Lanywa, to the Yenangyaung oilfield which consists of the whole of the area which the Commission has seen, and extends as far as certain villages which are a few miles out.

M-587. Act No. 1 of 1918 appears to give you very great powers as Warden. Are there many occasions on which you have to exercise these powers ?—I am not sure whether any order has been issued under sub-section (a) of Section 12-A concerning *dahs*, bludgeons and loaded sticks and as far as I can discover, from enquiries in my office, no order has been issued under (b). I personally have never had occasion to use Section 12 (A) (a).

M-588. You have powers to exclude persons from the oilfields area ?—Yes.

M-589. Is that a power that is often used ?—As far as I can ascertain, in 1927 three orders were passed, in 1928 none, in 1929 two by the Assistant Warden at Chauk. Those were orders of exclusion under Rule 68. There is one other order not included in that list ; I am not sure if it was passed in 1929 or 1930 ; it was passed by the Assistant Warden.

M-590. For what kind of reasons were those orders of exclusion issued ?—I cannot say as to those in 1927 ; it is quite possible that those orders are no longer in force ; there were one or two rather petty cases. As to the two in 1929, to the best of my recollection, the Assistant Warden ejected two persons who were inciting people living within the notified area of Chauk Town—and inciting them with some success—to refuse payment of the local taxes imposed by the Town Committee with the authority of the Local Government. The later order to which I referred was passed against one of those two men. Both those men I think appealed to the Commissioner, Magwe Division, who is the appellate authority ; and if I remember rightly—I have no copies of the orders here—the Commissioner indicated that the Assistant Warden might let them come back. He did not set aside the order. I could verify that later on. This man went to the Assistant Warden, and the Assistant Warden warned him by an order in writing saying that he could come back but if at any future time there was any indication that he was engaged in similar activities he would again expel him. Later on he did expel him. I have no copy of the order of expulsion here, but I am informed that it was actually read out in the Legislative Council. I do not know whether the warning issued by the Assistant Warden to this man previously was also so read out, because I have no copy of the proceedings.

M-591. Presumably an agitation against the payment of taxes was a political matter ?—Yes.

M-592. Have you during your time of office used these powers in any industrial labour questions ?—I myself have never passed such an order ; I have been here for 9 months in 1927-28 and since the beginning of 1929 ; I was also here during 1918 and the beginning of 1919, but at that time the power, although it existed, existed in a very wide form under the Defence of India Petroleum Rules which were made under the Defence of India Act. I do not think

I myself issued such an order, but several had been issued before I came here ; several men were removed from the oilfield altogether ; but that was not an industrial matter at all.

M-593. Are you aware that any of your Assistant Wardens have used these powers in labour or industrial matters ?—No ; the only three orders passed by the Assistant Warden all related to the no-tax campaign in Chauk.

M-594. *Mr. Cliff* : I take it that you as Warden have power to countermand an order of an Assistant ?—No, the Assistant Warden has exactly the same legal powers as the Warden. An appeal must go to the Commissioner, Magwe Division.

M-595. *The Chairman* : What is your relation with the municipal governments in your areas ?—My relation with the Yenangyaung Municipal Committee is officially none. Under the Burma Municipal Act I think the Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner of the Division have certain powers. It is the usual practice, and it is certainly the practice in this Division so far as I am aware, that the Commissioner exercises these powers conferred by the Municipal Act or the Rural Self-Government Act of controlling local bodies. The Warden has no official relation with local bodies except in so far as he is connected with the municipality by reason of his being Chairman of the Yenangyaung Hospital Committee.

M-596. Then do your position and your powers really relate to the multiplicity of technical questions that are constantly arising in the development of an oilfield where there are three or more competing producers ?—Yes, those are the essential functions of the Warden, and if it were not necessary to exercise those functions, probably the Warden would not exist at all.

M-597. The purpose of this Act and these powers is to see that the oilfield is developed in a manner which, while doing justice to prospectors and developers, is consistent with the interests of Burma as a whole ?—Perhaps that puts it a little too widely. The main function in this field is to see that bad work does not damage the oil sands which are originally the property of Government but are being exploited, either under grants or leases, by companies.

M-598. That is what I meant really : for the protection of the national property when that property is leased out to various interests ?—That is quite correct.

M-599. *Colonel Russell* :—You are the President of the Yenangyaung Municipal Hospital ?—The Yenangyaung Hospital Committee.

M-600. Is that an administrative Committee or an advisory committee ?—I think it can be correctly described as an administrative committee. It passes all bills ; it decides on all expenditure other than the salary of the sub-assistant surgeon, who is a Government servant, and is paid by Government. It appoints all servants of the hospital other than the sub-assistant surgeon.

M-601. So it is not really a municipal hospital at all ?—I think that requires further explanation. The committee is formed under the Hospital Finance Scheme of which the details may be found in a Resolution of Government dated 1922. That Resolution provides that in the case of hospitals situated

in municipalities there shall be a hospital committee composed of a certain number of members of the municipal committee elected by that committee, a certain number of members of the district council elected by that council, one or more Government officers appointed by the Commissioner of the Division, and a certain number of representatives of the general public also appointed by the Commissioner of the Division.

M-602. *The Chairman* : Is your position *ex officio*, or are you appointed by the Commissioner?—I have been appointed by the Commissioner both as a member and as President of the hospital committee; it is the custom to appoint usually the most senior Government officer in the place.

M-603. *Colonel Russell* : This hospital which is used to a very considerable extent by the employees of the oilfields is financed by the Municipality, the District Council, Government and also by donations, I understand?—That is so; the financing of this hospital has been the subject of correspondence more than once and the latest orders, which I only received a few days ago, have fixed the contribution for the next triennium of Government, District Council, Municipal Committee and two oil companies. That I may say depends on the goodwill of the oil companies.

M-604. Do the donations to be given by the oil companies find a place in the Government order?—The Government order must contain the exact way in which the total of Rs. 15,602, which is the basic cost of the hospital as calculated at the beginning of this scheme, is to be obtained. The actual orders of Government relating to the maintenance of the hospital for the next triennium which have just come give the following annual figures: total cost Rs. 15,602; Government Rs. 3,055; Magwe District Council Rs. 5,971; Municipal Committee Rs. 4,632; British Burma Petroleum Company Rs. 1,111; Indo-Burma Petroleum Company Rs. 833.

M-605. *The Chairman* : Those are companies that do not maintain hospitals of their own?—That is so. These figures are based on certain statistics of patients which have been collected. In addition to that there are donations or subscriptions of various people in the station, and various small firms pay. We have a subscription book. The Burmah Oil Company has promised Rs. 2,000 a year, not on the ground that it has a direct obligation, because it itself provides for all its employees, but because the hospital is a useful local institution.

M-606. *Colonel Russell* : This hospital is a necessity to the municipality?—It is.

M-607. If it were not there, there would be no medical facilities at all?—That is so; every municipal town in Burma has a hospital and it certainly should have one.

M-608. What does the Municipal Committee do in connection with the health control of its own municipal area?—I am not familiar with the details or with the criticisms passed by the Commissioner and the Director of Public Health; but it is the duty of a Municipal Committee under the Municipal Act to maintain the public health; it organizes day and night conservancy; it has a sanitary inspector, I believe, in charge of those; it has only recently, after many years, a piped water supply, the pipes of which

you will see in the roads. Under the orders of Government the senior Government medical officer in any town is *ex officio* health officer of the municipality unless that municipality has appointed a health officer of its own; but that appointment does not give him any executive control over the activities of the committee or its staff. This municipality has not placed the conservancy staff under the orders of the sub-assistant surgeon, who in my opinion, if he had control, would probably very greatly increase the efficiency of both day and night conservancy.

M-609. Is it the fact that the only remuneration that this senior medical officer gets as health officer of the municipality is Rs. 15 a month in order that he may go round to report causes of death, as a sort of travelling or conveyance allowance?—I think the Rs. 15 is probably paid to him for the purpose of supervising the registration of deaths. I think allowances of that kind have been permitted to sub-assistant surgeons, but as he is *ex officio* Health Officer, I think I am correct in stating that the Municipal Committee could not pay him any sum of money for performing the duties of Health Officer. He is a Government servant and he is *ex officio* Health Officer; it is part of his duty.

M-610. *The Chairman*: The point is that between the municipality and the rest of the area there is not any co-ordination in sanitation?—I am not certain whether the District Council has a Health Officer of its own; but if it has, the district is a vast area. I believe the District Council does a little in the way of sanitating the oilfield villages. If anything was to be done with them, they would require very much more drastic treatment than they have received. As regards co-ordination with the Burmah Oil Company's staff, I think the Commission were informed that there is none; but I hope that is not true. I arranged some time ago for all reports of epidemic disease that come to me to be sent to the Field Medical Officer and expect that is done. It is of great use to them, for instance, to know there is a case of cholera in the town.

M-611. *Colonel Russell*: You said that this medical officer of Government who is *ex officio* health officer, has to do supervision of registration of births and deaths. The figures that are available for Yenangyaung show, I think, that registration of births is not being done properly because your infantile mortality figure is an enormously high one?—I am not sufficiently familiar with the actual facts to express an opinion on that; it depends on the efficiency of the registrars who are appointed, and what inducements are given them by the municipality to perform their work properly.

M-612. Is not this area sufficiently important to have a separate health officer for the Yenangyaung Municipality?—The whole question is bound up with Local Government administration. At present we have the municipality which begins a little way along this road and ends before you get to the Finger Print Bureau, and we have these outside areas which are village tracts. They form part of a circle under a circle board, which circle extends down the river 10 or 15 miles and which forms part of the district under the control of the District Council.

M-613. Would it not be a great advantage to have an officer with public health qualifications to supervise the whole of public health work here and

paid for by contributions from the different bodies?—It might be possible to arrange that way; personally I would prefer a unified administration. But the question was gone into in and after 1919 and for reasons which were perfectly sound at the time the proposal was negatived. I think that since then things have not changed. The matter has been considered more than once.

M-614. *The Chairman*: Are we not taking you a little out of your province!—Yes, you are taking me a little out of my legal province, but sometimes all sorts of things come to me and I have to deal with them whatever my legal position may be.

M-615. *Mr. Ahmed*: The trade unionists suggested yesterday that the Government officers here did not help them in any way but always sided with the employers. Is it not part of your duty to help the workers to make representations in regard to their grievances?—I am not aware of what the trade unionists said. The Secretary of the Labour Union here saw me and expressed his desire to give evidence before the Labour Commission. As the Senior Government Officer here I naturally assisted any one who wished to communicate with the Labour Commission.

Is it not part of your duties to help the workers in making representations before their employers?

*The Chairman*: It is not his duty.

*The Witness*: If any individual had any complaint which could be dealt with under my powers I would naturally deal with it. If I considered that it was a case for a criminal or civil court I would tell him to go there. If it was a case of a man having a grievance against the person employing him I would tell him that it was no business of mine to assist him in making representations to his employers.

M-616. *Mr. Cliff*: You said that your jurisdiction extended over certain village tracts and the Municipality in addition to the oilfields. If you passed an order excluding certain people from the oilfields would that order apply to those villages and the Municipality?—I can exclude them from any part of the oilfields. Orders have been passed in the past excluding certain persons from the fenced area of the oilfields. But generally by "oilfields" I do not mean only places where oil is produced. The area of my jurisdiction is described in the manual and it includes one or two village tracts also.

M-617. When there was a strike in 1923 and again in 1926 were these powers under section 12-A exercised in any way that would prevent the people who were on strike from meeting together and making representations to the employers?—It looks as if section 12-A did not exist in 1923 or 1926.

M-618. Could not that section as it exists now be used to prevent the legitimate activities of workmen? It looks to me as if it could be exercised so as to absolutely break a strike?—The section enables the warden to prohibit such things as the carrying of certain weapons, collection of missiles, public exhibition of corpses or effigies, delivery of harangues, use of gestures or representation and other things which may be of a nature to outrage

morality or decency or probably inflame religious animosity or hostility between different classes. I have no personal experience of strikes and I cannot say whether these powers could be used in that way or not.

M-619. *The Chairman* : I think there is no question that these powers could be used so as to prevent a legitimate meeting of workmen to talk over their grievances and present them to their employers. Anyhow you have never used them in that way and never intend to use them !—No.

M-620. *Mr. Cliff* : It appears to me that these powers could be exercised in that way and I only want to know whether the witness agrees. I understand that he does not. The exact meaning of this section may be a subject for legal exposition !—As I said before, I have no experience of strikes ; and the only words which seem to relate to a strike as distinct from other kinds of dispute which may cause a disturbance are those which refer to the promotion of “hostility between different classes”. It appears to me that it gives power to prohibit the delivery of harangues which might promote hostility between the employers and the workmen. But I cannot say that a peaceful meeting will be prohibited.

M-621. Do you not consider that the taking of finger prints is no longer necessary ?—I think it is necessary to explain the origin of the system. About 1916, there was an epidemic of incendiarism in this field. For many years the oil companies here had not been satisfied with the police protection given on the field. Various methods of improvement were discussed and it was finally decided to adopt a system whereby it would be possible to restrict entrance to the field to persons who had something in the nature of a permit so as to protect the field against the criminal activities of certain persons. A fence was then put round the then drilled area. A Finger Print Bureau was instituted. Every employee on the field had his finger print taken and a pass issued to him. A pass can be refused by the Warden. If any man has been found to have had a previous conviction his case comes through the Sub-divisional Police Officer to the Warden who decides whether a pass should be refused or not. Since that time I understand that the finger print system has been found to be of great use by the Burmah Oil Company for keeping a record of the services of their men. Although there are certain difficulties in its working which do not affect labour particularly, until there was some general move for its abolition I think it should stay.

M-622. *The Chairman* : What was the motive of the incendiarism ?—I was not here at the time ; I have only heard casual statements from my predecessor. The motive may have been mere mischief. It may have been definitely political. All I know is that there was a serious situation demanding action on the part of Government, if the industry was to be carried on.

M-623. *Mr. Cliff* : I understand there was a situation which required drastic steps. But is there a necessity for it still ?—I would myself like to continue the system and make it more efficient. One difficulty is that the field has outgrown the fence and it would be very costly to extend it all round. A proposal has been made to substitute for the fence a sort of prohibited area which could be demarcated partly by fences and partly by posters and public notices. I should not like to discuss the matter now as

it is still with the Government. Anyhow I should like to see that undesirable persons were definitely kept out of the oilfields.

M-624. It is not because an offence has been committed but because of a fear of an offence being committed?—Yes. For instance the question of theft on the oilfields is a very serious one now. Every kind of material is stolen inspite of the vigilance of the police and the value of things lost amounts to a good deal every year. For this reason alone it is desirable to keep out undesirable persons. To fence the whole field now would be a very costly thing for the oil companies. As regards fear of offences being committed, I think it is true to say that every strike has been accompanied by an outbreak of incendiarism. Rigs are burnt down. Quite apart from the losses to the Companies caused by the burning down of the rigs and the consequent loss of production till the rigs are re-erected, the Government and the royalty receivers have to lose a considerable income. Moreover, if many rigs were burnt down and wells set fire to and the industry was disorganised, the wells producing water could not be pumped and the valuable oil sands would be flooded with water and damaged considerably. It is a very serious problem, now that the oil sands are old and much depleted. The oil sands are the property of Government and as Warden I have to see that the water is pumped out and the sands kept in good order. The finger-print bureau is part of a system of protection given to the oilfields and the scheme should be considered as a whole.

M-625. *Mr. Tyabji*: Besides your duties as Warden have you any work in connection with the Factory Act?—The Warden and the Assistant Warden are additional or assistant Inspectors of Factories under the Factories Act.

M-626. Do you deal with workmen's compensation?—I am Commissioner for Workmen's Compensation for this area and the Assistant Warden is Commissioner for the Sale Township.

M-627. When a fatal or serious accident occurs what do you do under the Factories Act?—In the case of a fatal accident, whatever Act it may fall under I invariably hold an inquest under the Criminal Procedure Code. As regards serious accidents I may or may not take any action. The duties of non-professional Factory Inspectors who are usually the District Magistrates, are laid down in a circular. Usually the Factory Inspector visits the factory and requires that certain things should be done and I visit the factory a month or two afterwards to see that the Factory Inspector's orders have been carried out. I invariably accompany the Factory Inspector to understand what he wants to be done.

M-628. I understand that a certain portion of the oilfields does not come under the Factories Act at all?—There is a definition of "factory" in the Factories Act, that there must be power machinery and 20 workers employed. Here there are quite a number of small places, such as gas pump stations and so forth, in which there is machinery which may require a fence or something like that but in which less than 20 people are employed; they are not factories. Then you have the whole of the general activity of the oilfield, both on the rig and outside it, which has nothing to do with the Factories Act.

M-629. So that you would have nothing to do with any accidents arising at oil wells or on the oilfields?—In my capacity as an additional Inspector of Factories I should have nothing to do with it, but in my capacity as Warden I might have a lot to do with it. Accidents may be caused by conflagrations of inflammable oils and substances; there is a circular in the Petroleum Manual which prescribes that any serious accidents of that kind shall be reported to Government. The custom is to hold an enquiry and send up a report. If it is a bad case, the Chief Inspector of Explosives is wired for and he comes. If death is caused there is an inquest. Then there is the Electricity Act; there is here a power station and an enormous amount of electrical energy is consumed. Occasionally a man is electrocuted. The rules prescribe reports in such cases. I have only myself had one case, in which I held an inquiry. Then there are accidents in factories; in fatal cases an inquest is held; in the case of other serious accidents an enquiry may or may not be held; it is a matter of discretion. There are also a very large number of extremely petty accidents. That matter was discussed with the Chief Inspector of Factories and he decided in the case of the Burmah Oil Company to ask for a monthly list of accidents. Many of them are of the pettiest possible description and it is really a question whether they should be reported at all. The difficulty is of getting a definition. Outside those three Acts there is the whole activity of the oilfield. There are small establishments of the same nature as factories, but employing less than 20 men; an accident in one of them would be dealt with as an accident on the oilfield. Rule 67 covers the point, but the expression “serious bodily injury” used in that rule is rather a vague term.

M-630. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: Is the Warden empowered to insist on extra guards or apparatus to prevent such accidents, if he so thinks fit?—The only two rules prescribing what may be called safety appliances are 29b and 45a. If I thought it necessary to expand them, I would discuss it with the companies and so forth and would then send up a recommendation to the Financial Commissioner. I think these two rules are all that is necessary, but if I thought further rules were necessary, I would send up recommendations.

M-631. *Mr. Clow*: If there were a fresh type of machinery on which you thought a guard was necessary you would have to get a special order; you could not do it yourself?—That is so.

M-632. *Mr. Tyabji*: Is there any Government publication giving the number of men employed and the number of accidents on the oilfields?—There is no report giving the number of accidents; it would be very difficult to give such a report, because one has to decide what an accident is. The Burmah Oil Company meticulously report the slightest accident in their factories, but I cannot see any use in having petty accidents reported and tabulated.

M-633. *Mr. Clow*: Both the Factories Act and the Mines Act prescribe which injuries shall be reported?—Yes, but these oilfields are not under the Mines Act.

M-634. *Mr. Tait*: In view of the fact that incendiarism has characterised every strike in the oilfields and the almost certainty that further incendiarism would be attempted in any strike in the future, do not you think that your powers of expulsion are very necessary?—I would prefer not to express an

opinion because the question was recently debated in the Legislative Council and the Members of Government definitely stated the policy of Government.

M-635. *U Aye Maung*: While the area of the oil wells is fenced, would it not be possible to take the Yenangyaung town proper out of that notified area?—The effect of that in practice would be that the powers of exclusion, and the powers under Sections 12 and 12A, which relates to property suspected to be stolen, would no longer apply in Yenangyaung town. As the limits of the oil-field were decided by Government some time ago, and as Government has already declared its policy recently, I would prefer also to give no answer to that.

M-636. *Mr. Clow*: Section 12A is merely a verbatim copy, is it not, of the law in Rangoon, if you look at Section 4 of Burma Act IV of 1899?—It appears to be a verbatim copy of a section of that Act which has been in force in Rangoon since 1911.

M-637. I take it that if the appellate authority considered that the measure was not necessary for the preservation of the public peace and safety, that authority would be justified in setting aside the order?—If he considered it was not necessary, it would be his duty to set aside the order.

M-638. In other words, your powers only begin when there is a reasonable apprehension of violence or danger to public safety?—Clearly.

M-639. Except in so far as an order under this Section can be made without duration of time, it does not differ essentially in principle from Section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code?—As far as I know it does not.

M-649. The Workmen's Compensation Act is only applicable to certain classes of workers on the oilfields?—Yes.

M-641. What percentage is covered by the Act?—I think about half.

M-642. Does it cover most of the hazardous occupations?—I would not like to answer that question in the affirmative. It applies to practically all work in a rig or derrick; it does not apply to work outside and accidents certainly do occur in other kinds of work.

M-643. Do you see any practical difficulty in extending the Act to all those who are employed in oil winning operations?—The only practical difficulty might be in the exact wording. Personally I am strongly in favour of making it compulsory. I would apply it to all persons employed in or in connection with the winning of any mineral from the earth. I do not see why any mineral should be excluded. The Burmah Oil Company have paid this compensation to everybody for years and I understand the other Companies do as well, irrespective of whether they are covered by the Act or not.

M-644. Are the provisions of the Act well-known to the workers here?—As far as I am aware, they are well-known.

M-645. There has been some difficulty about the posting up of vernacular notices?—Yes. These notices were drafted in Rangoon and I was asked whether I would be so good as to assist in seeing that the notices were affixed in establishments in the oilfields coming under the Workmen's Compensation Act. I agreed to do so. After some time the notices arrived and I sent them

out. Then Mr. Hunter's predecessor spoke to me about this and afterwards wrote, pointing out that the notice gave the impression that the Act referred to all workmen, and though the Company were in the habit of paying compensation to all their workmen, they thought it undesirable to produce the impression on the minds of the oil field labourers that this was a payment which the Company were compelled by law to make and not a pure Act of kindness. That matter was then referred back and was the subject of correspondence. I fully agree with the Burmah Oil Company; in fact I think the notice requires drastic alteration. The Act is a very complicated one; questions arise as to whether a bridge is so many feet long or a house so many feet high. I think it would be better to tell the workmen that they are probably entitled to compensation and had better go and see the Warden if they are not sure. I think that is better than telling a man he can order a copy of the rules from the Government Press where it is very likely out of stock for three months. I think clear notices printed in Burmese are useful, because most Burmans understand them; I am not certain as to the literacy of Ooriyas and Telugus. There should be an invariable right to compensation in my opinion; there is no reason why a workman should get compensation if he breaks his leg on a bridge of a certain length and should not get it if the bridge is of another length. I think all exceptions require strong justification.

M-646. Have you any suggestions to make as to the existing exceptions, for instance, in the case drunkenness?—No.

M-647. *Sir Alexander Murray*: Have you ever found it necessary to issue an order prohibiting the carrying of *dahs*?—I myself have never issued an order of that kind; I have never considered it.

M-648. At what stage are you as Warden entitled to call on the police?—Warden has no authority over the police whatever, but the officer who is the Warden is also a magistrate; he is known as the first additional magistrate, Yenangyaung, and magistrates have certain powers and duties under the Criminal Procedure Code.

M-649. If you issued one of these prohibition orders, what would be the next step; at what stage are you entitled to call on the police?—If I issued an order, the police would probably be one of the parties who had instigated me to issue the order, and I should certainly expect them to take steps to enforce it.

M-650. Have you an advisory board?—Yes.

M-651. How often do you call that board together?—The Yenangyaung advisory board meets regularly on every Thursday morning at 7 A.M. and at such other times as may be necessary. It discusses matters almost all of which may be described as subterranean, that is, things which have to be done below the surface of the ground.

M-652. *Mr. Tyabji*: *Dahs* in this district are more or less for household use, are not they?—I am afraid that is rather hard to say; I have seen many people carrying *dahs* which did not appear to be well adapted for household purposes. Everybody in Burma possesses a *dah* of some kind.

(The witness withdrew.)

**BURMA.****Fourth Meeting.**

ON THE IRRAWADDY FLOTILLA COMPANY'S P. S. "TAPING" ON THE RIVER  
IRRAWADDY PROCEEDING FROM YENANGYAUNG TO PROME.

Wednesday, 29th October 1930.

**PRESENT :**

The Rt. Hon'ble J. H. WHITLEY (*Chairman*).

Sir ALEXANDER MURRAY, KT., C.B.E.

Mr. JOHN CLIFF.

Mr. A. G. CLOW, C.I.E., I.C.S.

Mr. KABIR-UD-DIN AHMED,  
Bar-at-Law.

Mr. J. TAIT.

Mr. S. A. S. TYABJI.

Mr. S. LALL, I.C.S.

Mr. A. DIBDIN.

} *Assistant Commissioners.*

} *Joint Secretaries.*

**Statement by IBADUL HUK, a seaman on P.S. "Taping".**

M-653. I come from Chittagong City. I have been a seaman 12 years ; I was first engaged at Rangoon ; a serang brought me to Rangoon. I myself paid the fare to Rangoon, which was Rs. 16. I brought that Rs. 16 from my home ; it was my own money ; I borrowed it from a mahajan (moneylender) in Chittagong.

M-654. I am married. Since I was first recruited I have made the outward journey from my own country three times. I am paid Rs. 25-8-0 a month. When I am at Rangoon I live in the house of a man of my village ; I pay him Re. 1-8-0 for living there. The Company has no quarters there.

M-655. When I was recruited I did not give the serang anything for my appointment. My wages are paid into my own hand by the serang who receives the money from the Captain. The serang deducts Rs. 6 a month as the cost of my subsistence.

M-656. I am in debt to the extent of Rs. 150 ; I incurred that debt for my marriage. I had a child which died. My wife lives in Chittagong ; I send her Rs. 12 to Rs. 15 a month. I wear my own clothes ; I am not given any clothing allowance. (Mr. Tyabji said that of the wages of Rs. 25-8-0, Re. 1-8-0 was for clothing).

M-657. My master is the serang. I have periods of unemployment ; before coming on this boat I was unemployed for 6 or 7 months ; the serang for whom I work got employment, but I could not come to the serang and so I did not get employment.

M-658. When they were short of men they took me on ; I came previously when there were plenty of men and I did not get work. During the

12 years I have been a seaman I have worked for 6 or 7 serangs. My first steamer was the *Japan* on which I served for three years; I then went home for 2½ years.

M-659. I stayed at home so long because there was no one else in the house. While I was at home I was cultivating my own lands. When I came back I next served on the *Prome* on which I stayed two years. I then went home for 1½ years.

M-660. When I came back I was idle for 6 months and I lived in that same lodging place of which I have spoken. Then I again got employment on *P.S. Prome* steamer on which I remained 8 months. After that I came on this boat.

M-661. I was continuously employed during the time I was on *P. S. Prome* and this steamer. When the Captain of *P. S. Prome* was changed, the whole crew went out and then I came here. This is not the same Captain as on the *P. S. Prome*.

M-662. The crew that was on this ship before I came here moved out when there was a change of Captain. The serang who was with me on *P. S. Prome* did not come to this ship with me. When I was on *P. S. Japan* I got the same pay as now; for three years I got Rs. 25-8-0 throughout.

M-663. I am paid each month; I get my wages for this month on the 7th or 8th of next month. I do not think it is my fate ever to become a serang. There is an examination for the post of serang; I have not passed it.

M-664. I do not serve on the inland river steamers of Bengal because my people came here and I came with them. I served in Calcutta before I came to *P. S. Prome*; I then got Rs. 14 a month.

M-665. If I have any grievance I can go up to the sahib quite freely. I have not in fact spoken to the sahib. I do not get any service book.

M-666. I have grievances; I am over-worked; I start at 6 A. M.; then I get an hour for a meal; I come back from my meal at 9 and then work till 5. After 5 there is no work but I am on call.

M-667. I am not paid while the ship is laid up,—I am paid off. I have no seaman's trade union; there is a movement to form a union and they have taken the names of those who are willing to join; 8 or 9 days ago in Mandalay they were trying to form a union. I have no grievance except over-work.

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**Statement by ABDUL NABI, a serang on *P.S. "Taping"*.**

M-668. I come from the village of Sayadpur which is 24 miles to the north of Chittagong; 8 other seamen on this ship come from my village and the remainder come from a village 2 or 3 miles away.

M-669. I have under me on this ship 15 men altogether; 10 lascars, 1 kassab, 2 donkeywallahs and 2 sukanis. I have been in the service of the Irrawaddy Flotilla Company about 27 years; I have been with this Captain about a year and 8 months. I have served under 10 or 12 Captains.

M-670. I cannot keep count of the number of ships I have been in. I started as a *khalasi* on the mail steamer from Mandalay to Rangoon. In those days the pay was Rs. 19. In 6 months I became a *sukani*.

M-671. I was promoted so quickly because I had worked in Calcutta before for 2 years. I worked on the Assam mail. In those days the pay was very small and work was heavy. I was a *sukani* 6 years and I have been a serang over 16 years.

M-672. When I first became a serang I was paid Rs. 35 ; I now get Rs. 46-8-0, Re. 1-8-0 of that being uniform allowance. When I am in Rangoon I live at Botataung, paying Re. 1-8-0 a month rent.

M-673. My family live at Chittagong ; I have a wife and three children, one of whom is grown up. I have land in my own country ; since taking up this employment I have increased my holding of land. I have two bullocks and one cow with a calf.

M-674. I cannot give up work because I have children to support ; I do not get a pension. When I am away from home my son, aged 20, looks after the cultivation of my land ; he has just got married.

M-675. I and my two brothers were joint tenants of land ; we paid a rent of Rs. 18 to the landlord ; now we have separated and I pay a separate rent of Rs. 7. The rent has increased by Rs. 2.

M-676. The rule of the Company is that we go with the Captain ; when the Captain goes on leave we all go on leave ; if the Captain retires then we have to look about and we are left without a job until we find a new Captain.

M-677. I cannot say how long I have been out of employment looking for a Captain ; I may be out of a job 3, 4 or 5 months ; it varies. Those who are lucky get employment in 10 or 15 days ; those who are unlucky have to wait 5 or 6 months.

M-678. Before I got an appointment with this Captain I was out of work for 3 months and I waited in Rangoon. I do not have to pay money to anyone to get employment. I feed my men and I take an allowance for feeding them.

M-679. Before the strike I used to deduct Rs. 5 from their wages, but since the strike I deduct Rs. 6, as they have an increase in pay. I take no money from my *khalasis* before they join.

M-680. The men pay their own fares from Chittagong to here ; I do not pay anybody's fare except my own. It costs me Rs. 16 to get here. When the ship goes to Rangoon I stay on the ship.

M-681. We get holidays on festival days, but if there is much work to be done we only get leave for an hour or so to say our prayers. I do not work on a festival, but I cannot leave the ship ; everything is in my charge and I dare not leave the ship.

M-682. When things are lost the storekeeper assesses the damage and that is deducted from our wages. I am not paid a commission ; on the big ships the serang gets a commission.

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Statement by GUNOO MEAH, a fireman on P.S. "Taping".

M-683. I have been 8 years in this service. I come from Chittagong. All the firemen on this ship come from the same village, some from the same *basti* and some from the neighbourhood. I have done all my service on this ship.

M-684. I have not been continuously employed during the past 8 years but whenever I have been employed it has been on this ship. I have been with different serangs at different times.

M-685. My pay is Rs. 29 a month and I get a uniform allowance of Re. 1-8-0 a month. During these 8 years I have been to my country three times; the first time I stayed there 6 months, the second time 4 months and the third time 3 months.

M-686. I have no land of my own; when I go home I do odd jobs. I have no father. I have recently married; I have no children.

M-687. I have incurred a debt of Rs. 500; I borrowed Rs. 300 of that for my marriage and some more money for the maintenance of my family.

M-688. I send home Rs. 15 or Rs. 16 a month, but sometimes I am only able to send Rs. 10. I stint myself and undergo some hardship in order to send money home.

M-689. The interest on my debt is Rs. 5 a month for Rs. 100. I try my best to clear the loan, but I cannot; the loan goes on mounting up. The reason why I spent Rs. 300 on my marriage is that we have to spend a decent sum on our marriage in our country otherwise we cannot get married.

M-690. When I borrowed the money I signed a stamped paper with my signature and my thumb impression. I keep an account in my mind of what I have paid the *mahajan* and how much I owe him. I do not know how much I am in debt to-day; I must go on paying at the rate of Rs. 5 for every Rs. 100 for some time now before my debt is cleared.

M-691. Our wages are very low; it is with great difficulty that we manage to live.

M-692. There are no fixed hours of work; we are on call all the time, even after the work is over. Even though we are off duty, if the sahib calls us we must go. When the engine is off I have to put out the fires and clean the engine; in this way I am employed for a long time.

M-693. When I go home and come back I do not get employment for four or five months. I did not pay anything to the serang to get employment.

M-694. We work in shifts, 4 hours in the saloon and 4 hours in the engine room. The number of men on this ship has always been 8: 2 men work with the officers and 6 men work in the engine room in two shifts of 3 men each.

M-695. When we fall ill we are not paid anything; we are only paid for the days we work. When we are ill we have got to go on shore and live in a hired house.

M-696. When I go home, if there is a vacancy in another ship, I will go in that ship. Some time ago on this ship I was ill with fever; I was put off at Mandalay where I stayed for 4 or 5 months. Then this ship came to Mandalay; I knew the serang and got a job from him.

M-697. Near the river at Mandalay there is a sort of home for passengers and I stayed there. Every passenger there has to pay Re. 1 a day.

M-698. We have no pension or provident fund.

**BURMA.****Fifth Meeting.****RANGOON.***Thursday, 30th October 1930.***PRESENT :**The Rt. Hon'ble J. H. WHITLEY (*Chairman*).

Sir VICTOR SASSOON, Bart.

Sir ALEXANDER MURRAY, Kt., C.B.E.

Mr. A. G. CLOW, C.I.E., I.C.S.

Mr. KABIR-UD-DIN AHMED, Bar.-at-Law.

Mr. JOHN CLIFF.

Miss B. M. LE POER POWER.

Lt.-Col. A. J. H. RUSSELL, C.B.E.  
I.M.S. (*Medical Assessor*).

Mr. G. D. BIRLA.

Mr. J. TAIT.

U AYE MAUNG.

Mr. S. A. S. TYABJI.

U HLA BU.

} *Assistant Commissioners.*Mrs. TE TE LUCE (*Lady Assessor*).

Mr. S. LALL, I.C.S.

Mr. A. DIBDIN.

} *Joint Secretaries.*

**Mr. A. B. MEHTA (President), Mr. S. T. SADASIVAN, Mr. V. A. L. SIMHAM AYYAR, and Mr. K. M. DESAI (Secretary), representatives of the Burma Indian Chamber of Commerce.**

M-699. *The Chairman*: Mr. Mehta, has your Chamber considered the practicability of establishing some control of immigration at the source, in order, first, to make it possible to limit the number of immigrants to a figure more nearly equal to the number of people likely to obtain employment, and, secondly, to enable health precautions against smallpox, cholera and hook-worm and so on to be taken on the other side instead of after the immigrants have arrived in Burma?—(*Mr. Mehta*) We have not considered the matter.

M-700. Has your Chamber any suggestion to make to us with regard to the immigrants who are recruited by *maistries* on the other side and brought over here?—We do not want any recruiting agency either official or unofficial for Burma. There is always a large volume of labour available in Burma.

M-701. You do not favour any system similar to that which exists with regard to emigration from India into Ceylon and Malaya?—We do not favour any such system. Our main objection to such a system will be that work here in Burma is seasonal whereas in Malaya and Ceylon it is perennial. There is

plenty of employment here between November and April, but there is very little employment in the latter part of the year.

M-702. In that case are not the unemployed a burden upon Burma?—  
Yes.

M-703. *Mr. Tyabji*: Could the rice mills recruit labour and keep them on for one or two years?—They cannot keep them for a full year, because they have not got full work all the year round.

M-704. *The Chairman*: Has your Chamber considered the possibility of changing the present system of paying the labourers through the *maistries* to a direct system of payment to the workers themselves?—We would certainly prefer direct payment, but we do not see how it can be done.

M-705. Are the workers here indebted to any extent?—With regard to the Indian workers we can say that they are heavily indebted. It is mainly due to the *maistry* system of recruitment where the *maistry* advances some money to the labourer either to pay off his village debts before he leaves for Burma or as an inducement to go to Rangoon. The labourer is not able to pay back this advance, and once he falls into debt he remains in debt for ever. If recruitment through *maistries* is abolished, indebtedness also will stop to a great extent.

M-706. It applies only to 1/10 of the Indian workers who are recruited. Speaking of the Indian workers as a whole, would you agree to a proposal like that which obtains in Ceylon whereby no such debts should be recoverable in Burma?—The money has been paid by the *maistry* for one reason or other and it is only fair that he should get it back.

M-707. Would you be in favour of the abolition of the power of the Court to make an order attaching the man's wages and making the employer collect the debts?—Yes, I would be in favour of a proposal like that.

M-708. *Sir Alexander Murray*: How did you find that out of 300,000 Indian labourers in Burma only 25,000 were recruited in India?—It is only an approximate estimate.

M-709. What kind of official agency do you wish to have to look after the welfare of labourers here?—Some sort of official agency connected with the provinces from which recruitment is made.

M-710. According to you, there are 25,000 labourers recruited in India and 300,000 Indian labourers recruited in Burma. They all work in various parts of Burma such as Namtu, Yenangyaung, Rangoon, and so on. When any one of these labourers has got a grievance, what do you wish the Labour Commissioner to do?—The Labour Commissioner will be a person appointed by the Government of India and he has to enquire into the grievances and see that the labourers are treated properly. If there were cases of injustice or ill-treatment he must represent the matter to Government and the employers concerned.

M-711. *The Chairman*: Do you suggest that he should have some executive powers in Burma?—He has to report to the Government of India, the Government of Burma and inform the Government from which the labourers are recruited.

M-712. He is a friend in court, not having any powers ?—Yes.

M-713. *Sir Alexander Murray*: Take the case of an Indian who is not recruited in India but who comes to Burma of his own free will and is working in some part of Burma. If he has any grievance do you think that he ought to go to this Labour Commissioner who should write to the Government of the province from where the labourer has come, it may be Madras, or the United Provinces or Nepal ?—He should write to the local Government here enquiring whether such treatment was given to the labourer.

M-714. There has been a suggestion that an extra rupee should be assessed on the emigrants from Burma in order to help to provide additional accommodation. I find that your Chamber suggests that a separate trust should be set up to deal with the question of accommodation. What necessity is there for setting up such a trust when you have already got the Corporation of Rangoon, the Development Trust, the Medical and Health Boards and other bodies ?—The separate trust should be responsible for building chawls from the additional cess, because we think that it will be cheaper to build houses if the work is taken over by a separate trust. Moreover, this work must be put into the hands of an individual trust because this additional accommodation is required for Indians and it must be under Indian control.

M-715. There should be an *ad hoc* trust for the purpose of building houses for Indian labourers only ?—Yes.

M-716. Not Burmese labour ?—(*Mr. Sadasivan*) Any labour.

M-717. *Mr. Clow*: You refer to the unemployment among manual labourers. Are you in favour of restricting immigration in order to reduce unemployment ?—(*Mr. Mehta*) Yes, if it is practicable. But how can we stop all the labour coming in ; how can we select which labour should come in and which should not and in what proportion ?

M-718. Suppose nobody is allowed to come in except those for whom the employer had a post ?—That matter has not been considered by our Chamber.

M-719. You say in one part of your memorandum that the Government have been too eager to give effect to the Conventions and Recommendations of the International Labour Conference. Do you mean that certain Conventions and Recommendations which have been adopted should not have been adopted in India ?—Yes.

M-720. Which ones ?—(*Mr. Sadasivan*) We do not refer to any special convention. Our point is that other countries have not universally adopted all the Conventions.

M-721. Nor has India.—We have adopted more.

M-722. Not at all. I want to know which Convention you think was wrongly adopted ?—We had in mind the general industrial policy of the Government.

M-723. Can you point me to any Convention you think should not have been adopted but was adopted ?—(*No answer*).

M-724. *Mr. Birla*: You must have many employers who are members of your Chamber ?—(*Mr. Mehta*) Yes.

M-725. In which trades are they interested as employers?—Match factories and rice mills.

M-726. And also saw mills?—Very few members are interested in saw mills.

M-727. As employers are they largely interested in trade and commerce or in industries?—More or less in trade and commerce.

M-728. Very few as employers are interested in industries?—Comparatively very few.

M-729. Can you give an approximate idea of the total number of workers employed by the members of your Chamber?—About 5 to 6 thousand.

M-730. Among the gentlemen who have appeared before the Commission are there any actual employers, or are they all business men interested in trade and commerce?—They are mostly business men.

M-731. Therefore they are not in close touch with the workers?—No.

M-732. They take only as much interest in the Indian labour as any Indian residing in Burma ought to take?—Yes.

M-733. They appear before the Commission just to suggest certain things in the interest of the Indian labourer?—Yes.

M-734. You say in your memorandum that while the Government have been too eager to give effect to the Conventions and Recommendations of the International Labour Conference they have been slow to a fault in extending legitimate protection to any industry when such intervention was obviously called for. Is that the general opinion prevailing among Indian business men whether in Burma or in India?—In Burma especially.

M-735. Probably what you meant was that you do not object to the ratification of the Conventions but that if labour is to be protected the industries should not be ignored, and that the Government while doing every thing possible to increase the cost of production has ignored the interests of the industries?—Yes, that is what we mean.

M-736. May I take it for granted that you are not against doing anything in the interest of labour provided that the interests of the industries are properly safeguarded?—Yes.

M-737. You are not averse to do anything which may benefit the workers?—No.

M-738. With regard to the tax of Rs. 2 which is now in existence and the extra tax of a rupee on every male passenger leaving Burma which your Chamber has very reluctantly, as you say, approved of, may I enquire why a discrimination should be made between a passenger entering Burma and a passenger leaving Burma. You have admitted that a good deal of unemployment is prevailing in Burma, particularly among Indians. A man who is heavily in debt and has no employment in Burma would naturally like to go back to his country. If you ask him to pay this tax do you not think it will be causing a serious hardship on him? Will it not be better if taxation is imposed on a man entering Burma rather than on a man leaving Burma?—The labourer

comes here to make money and when he comes he is, as a rule, in a poor condition. But when he leaves Burma he has earned some money and it will therefore be more easy for him to pay the tax than it will be when he enters Burma.

M-739. My point is that if one is heavily indebted and wants to go back to his country just to get out of his troubles it will be causing a very serious hardship on such a man if he were asked to pay this tax of Rs. 2?—We admit that this tax is a hardship to a great extent. We must say that we are opposed to this tax, but if the tax is to be paid we think that it will be easier for the man who leaves Burma to pay than for one who enters it.

M-740. I think you are putting a premium on the men who stay in Burma although unemployment exists here; in other words, you compel them to remain in Burma?—When they have to pay their passage which is about Rs. 15 we think they can pay this tax of Rs. 2 as well.

M-741. Have you got any idea as to whether this Rs. 2 tax per head has been spent for the benefit of the labourer?—(*Mr. Sadasivan*) No.

M-742. Is it because you are not prepared to trust the Development Trust which has not spent a single pie so far for the benefit of those from whom the money was collected that you want to have a separate trust?—Yes. Very little, if at all, has been spent.

M-743. You think that if the management was in Indian hands the money would be properly spent for the benefit of the Indian labourer?—(*Mr. Mehta*) Yes.

M-744. In reply to a question you said that you do not mind whether the money is spent for the benefit of the Burman labourer or of the Indian labourer. Do you stick to that answer or do you think that your Committee holds a different view on that because I thought that it would be quite fair if the money paid by the Indian labourer was spent for his benefit?—(*Mr. Sadasivan*) The scheme appears to be for the Indian labourer only.

M-745. So you would modify your answer?—(*Mr. Mehta*) Yes.

M-746. *Miss Power*: In your memorandum you say that your members are either individually or collectively large employers of labour. Does your Chamber under the terms of its constitution concern itself with labour conditions or not?—(*Mr. Sadasivan*) We consider them as and when they are brought before our notice.

M-747. In what way are they brought before your members? Are problems affecting individual members of your Chamber submitted to the Chamber as a whole for discussion?—No.

M-748. *Mr. Cliff*: Have you got a clause in your constitution which empowers your Chamber to consider labour questions from the standpoint of your labourers?—We have no particular clause like that.

M-749. *Miss Power*: Has your Chamber any views on the possibility of decasualising labour in Burma? For instance, in Mr. Bennison's report he states that the demand for labour in rice mills is not the same all the year round but the work could probably be spread over the year more evenly than is done at present. In view of that remark of Mr. Bennison have you any views

as to the possibility of decasualising the labour in the rice mills?—(*Mr. Mehta*) It is a speculative trade. We cannot express an opinion whether the work could be evenly distributed or not.

M-750. Is it that you cannot express an opinion or that you disagree with Mr. Bennison?—I disagree.

M-751. You think it is not possible to spread work more evenly over the year?—I do not think it is possible.

M-752. Dealing with industrial welfare you say that very little is done. Could you point to any form of industrial welfare which is financially practicable which you consider should be done and has not been done among the bigger employers in Burma?—Very little in the matter of schools, hospitals, sanitary arrangements, etc., has been done by the employers. Except in the case of the Burma Railways and the Burmah Oil Company the employers have not provided facilities for educating the children of their labourers.

M-753. You disagree with the Committee on Control that employers should be required to house their labour, but at the same time you appear to be in favour of their being required to educate their labourers' children?—They cannot house their labourers because they are not in position to do so, and that is why we say that the Government or the municipality must take it up.

M-754. But is it your view that in matters such as the provision of education and hospitals, for instance, employers should take a greater share than they have hitherto done?—They ought to.

M-755. *Mr. Tait*: Reverting to the figure of recruitment of 25,000 men which you referred to before, you must have had some basis for arriving at that figure. I take it that, for instance, in the case of rice mills you put down something like 14,000, 6,000 for dock labour and so on, and thus arrived at the figure of 25,000?—It is only an approximate figure and not an exact figure.

M-756. Did you not have some basis for even suggesting 25,000 as the approximate figure?—We know that in rice mills the labour is mostly casual and is recruited through *maistries*. As far as this labour is concerned we can get a fair idea of the number recruited. In other works, recruitment is not done by *maistries* but by other agencies.

M-757. Do you think that 100 per cent. of the coolies that these rice mill *maistries* employ for carrying paddy are recruited in India?—In some of the mills the labour is now engaged locally.

M-758. So that 100 per cent. is not recruited in India?—No.

M-759. What percentage do you consider of the labour employed in the mills is recruited in India and what percentage is engaged locally?—In the mills I think 25 per cent. is recruited in India and 75 per cent. is recruited in Burma.

M-760. In the Burma rice mills the *maistries* are supposed to go to India and recruit a certain percentage of the labour for the mills. I want to know what percentage of the labour is recruited directly in India and brought over to the mills in Burma?—About one-third or one-fourth

M-761. You say "Unemployment would appear to be widespread among literate and educated classes as well as among manual labourers." Do you mean that unemployment is widespread at certain periods of the year only or at every period of the year?—Especially during certain periods of the year.

M-762. Would you consider that unemployment is widespread in, say, January to March?—In January to March it is comparatively little.

M-763. So that in January to March there is practically no unemployment in Burma?—There is unemployment only to a little extent.

M-764. Dealing with the question of housing you say at one place that the shipping companies should be requested to contribute substantially towards the cost of the rest-house on the foreshore. How do you reconcile that with your statement in another place that it is too much to expect the employers to find the necessary capital and organisation to provide housing for their employees?—I do not think there is any contradiction. We have referred to the shipping companies because they get large sums of money for bringing men from India and taking them back. (*Mr. Sadasivan*) There we are not referring to the industrial employers as a class, but are mainly referring to trade carriers.

M-765. On the question of welfare you say "No provision is made by employers for old age and premature retirement." Would the members of your Chamber who are employers of labour welcome legislation for a compulsory provision by all employers of labour for old age and premature retirements?—(*Mr. Mehta*) As a Chamber we cannot express any opinion now, but our individual opinion is that there should be such a provision.

M-766. In another part of your memorandum you say: "Moreover, any monetary advantage given to them in the shape of higher wages or bonuses tends to stimulate injurious habits instead of its being utilized to raise their standard of living or to any other good account." Are we to understand from that that the average coolie now gets as wages what he really expected to get when he came to Burma, that he does not really want any more than he is getting now and that if he did get any more than he is getting now he would merely waste it?—No.

M-767. But you make a definite statement that he would use any extra money for no good purpose?—That is why we insist on the enforcement of free elementary education.

M-768. Dealing with the question of trade combinations and industrial disputes you mention at several places about the general illiteracy of the workmen. In one place you say: "My Chamber considers it most essential that trade unions should be run and managed by the workers themselves although it does not object to assistance being rendered by outsiders for a temporary period." You also make a remark at another place that your Chamber begs to invite the special attention of the Commission to the fact that in this country lightning strikes are frequent because, due to their illiteracy and ignorance, workmen are prone to be easily misled." Do you not think that due to the illiteracy and ignorance of the workmen they are likely to be easily misled by an unprincipled trade union leader?—Yes.

M-769. *Mr. Cliff*: All employees?—No.

M-770. *Mr. Tait*: Would you say from your experience generally that a trade union leader if he were an unprincipled person would be led away by communal interests?—Yes.

M-771. *The Chairman*: You object to an unprincipled person in general?—Yes.

M-772. *U Hla Bu*: With regard to the proposed tax of one rupee on every male passenger leaving Burma, I take it that your opinion is that because the labourers who are going back from Burma have sufficient money with them they can very well pay this tax?—We do not say that they have sufficient money. That is not always the case.

M-773. If they have not made any money here how will they go back to India?—They must somehow go because they cannot live here.

M-774. I put it to you that they go after making sufficient money?—Not sufficient.

M-775. You know the Development Trust has got an establishment of engineers and clerks, and they could undertake the housing scheme better than a separate trust?—That will make the scheme more expensive.

M-776. Can you explain why it should be more expensive?—Because the Development Trust is spending money extravagantly. They have to pay the land tax.

M-777. The payment of land tax has got nothing to do with it. This money is earmarked for the building of chawls, and whether the work is done by the Development Trust or any other Trust, the money must be spent on the construction of chawls only and not on any other buildings?—Yes. The Development Trust comes into contact with other Government Departments. If it is an independent body, it can do better.

M-778. If the Development Trust by itself, without coming into contact with other Government Departments, does the work, you would have no objection?—No.

M-779. *Mr. Tyabji*: Is it your view that the factors of impermanence of employment, i.e., seasonal type of industries and seasonal type of agricultural employment, are the larger causes of unemployment?—Yes.

M-780. In connection with trying to get labourers more permanent work, you said that that could not be done with regard to rice mills, because it is seasonal type of work; but in the shipping and in Government concerns, could they not keep a larger proportion of permanent employees than they do at present?—Yes, they could.

M-781. You said that the cost of housing might be too much for employers, but do you not think that that would depend upon the type and the extent of the industry? If it is a large industry, it might afford it, but if it is a small one, it might not be able to afford it?—Yes.

M-782. With regard to the housing scheme, you desire that a separate trust be formed, and your reason for it is that the present Development Trust

is rather extravagant and has the reputation of raising its rents too much?—Yes. They raise their rents abnormally.

M-783. Do you know of any cases in which the Development Trust has raised its rents from 30 to over 100 per cent?—Yes.

M-784. Do you not think that a body like the Development Trust cannot take charge of the problem of housing labour and give adequate attention to it?—I quite agree with you.

M-785. For instance, the Excise Department would be wanting to put up a liquor shop next door to the workmen's dwellings, which is undesirable, and the Development Trust, owing to its constitution, might not be able to resist it?—That is so.

M-786. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: Why should it not be able to resist?—Because the liquor shop is for the profit of Government, and the Trust would be helping Government indirectly.

M-787. *U Hla Bu*: Because it is a quasi-Government body?—Yes.

M-788. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: You want the Trust to be a non-official body?—Yes.

M-789. *Sir Alexander Murray*: Spending official money?—It is not official money; it is money collected from the labourers.

M-790. But it is collected by officials?—They may collect it, but it comes from the pockets of the labourers.

M-791. *Mr. Tyabji*: Do you know that the funds for the Rangoon University were collected with the help of officials?—Yes.

M-792. Do you know that the University funds are managed not by an officer of the Crown, but by an independent person?—Yes. There is the University Trust.

M-793. Do you know that the Chairman of the University Trust, Mr. deGlanville, who is in charge of the building operations of the University, is not an official but a lawyer?—Yes.

M-794. Therefore, will you agree with me that the contention that a Trust like that cannot be managed by an independent man without the assistance of Government officers does not hold water?—I agree with you.

M-795. Can you give us any instances, except the instance of the last strike, in which strikes have been declared at random, without giving notice of some sort to the employers?—In 1926 the shipping strike was of a similar nature. I cannot remember any other instance at the moment.

M-796. Would you agree with me if I say that in almost every case before a strike took place the employees had made several petitions to their employers?—In certain cases they have done so.

M-797. Do you desire to make any statement with regard to the Trades Disputes Act?—We are considering the question, and after due deliberation we will send in a supplementary memorandum giving our views on the subject.

M-798. *Col. Russell*: Has your Chamber of Commerce any representation on the Municipal Corporation of Rangoon?—No.

M-799. You have never had any representation on it?—No.

M-800. You say that the general health condition of the workers is far from satisfactory. Does your Chamber not think that it would improve general health conditions if you had a selection before the labourers came from India?—Yes, it would.

M-801. *Mr. Cliff*: With regard to methods of recruitment, do I understand that it is the considered opinion of your Chamber that labour should be afforded some protection here in Burma?

*The Chairman*: They profess to speak only for Indian labour, not for labour generally.

M-802. *Mr. Cliff*: Do not the members of your Chamber employ any other labour than Indian labour?—In one of our match factories there is some Burmese labour employed, but the number is not large.

M-803. You express no opinion in regard to labour generally in Burma or in India?—We can speak about Indian labour, but not about Burmese labour.

M-804. Would your observations on "Hours" if they were accepted by this Commission, apply to Indian labour only?—No, they apply to all labour.

M-805. Does not the same remark then apply to your observations with regard to protection against *maistries*?—(*Mr. Sadasivan*) Yes, it does, as part of the Burman labour also is recruited through *maistries*.

M-806. May I take it that it is the considered opinion of your Chamber that industrial labour here in Burma should be afforded protection?—Yes.

M-807. Has your Chamber considered the policy of adopting compulsory arbitration in order to afford protection to the labourers?—We have suggested a standing conciliation board being appointed to interfere in trade disputes at an early stage.

M-808. Are you in favour of compulsory arbitration, have you any opinion on that?—(*Mr. Mehta*) We have not considered that point.

M-809. You told *Mr. Birla* that you objected to a tax on the incoming labourer because he had not yet earned money?—What I wanted to say was that we object to it, but if an Indian labourer has to pay the tax, it is better to tax him when he is going away out of Burma, when he has some money.

M-810. Is that because he has earned money in Burma?—Because he has to make his wages in Burma. He comes to Burma to earn money, and he can pay it better when he returns to India.

M-811. Then you propose to tax the shipping interests, because they have a special interest?—Because they have monopolies here to carry coolies from India to Burma and back.

M-812. Do you propose that the ratepayer in Rangoon and the employer in Burma should escape any levy for this purpose?—Not escape, but they cannot afford it. If the industries can afford it, they should be charged.

If there is no protection given to industries, how can they pay additional taxes ?

M-813. Is it the view of your Chamber that labour is able to pay what the industry is unable to pay ?—It is our Chamber's opinion that industries also should be protected.

M-814. The proposal is, first of all, to provide a rest house for immigrant labour. The other part of the proposal is to build barracks for cooly labour here in Rangoon. There is a proposal being put forward that they should be taxed Re. 1 when they are leaving this country. As I understand it, your Chamber objects to that tax, but because there is no alternative, you are prepared to fall in with it, provided you can have the management of the proceeds of the tax ; is that the position ?—Yes.

M-815. Is the taxpayer in Rangoon and the industry in Burma to escape the payment of any of this money that is needed for building the rest house and the cooly barracks ?—(*Mr. Sadasivan*) The question of housing labour was referred to us by Government, and they made this suggestion of a one-rupee tax on passengers leaving Burma. They at the same time stated that if this tax is not agreed to, there is no other tax which they can think of, and the scheme would have to be dropped. Because there was no other alternative we agreed to it. If any other method is found by which the ratepayers or industries could be taxed, by all means it may be done.

M-816. It may be that the proposal to tax an outgoing labourer is a proposal to tax a person who is unable to defend himself ?—We agreed to it because there was no other alternative. We are against the position that if this tax is dropped the housing scheme should also be dropped.

M-817. You want, as I understand it, to tax the labourer, and you want to administer it ?—No. We have been against this tax. Because they stated that it is the only source from which revenue can be obtained, we agreed to it. We are not in favour of extravagant bodies spending it,

M-818. You stated that the only qualification you would make to the acceptance of the proposal is that a separate body should be set up to administer it, on which a large majority of Indians should be represented ?—(*Mr. Mehta*) Yes.

M-819. It appears to me that in your answers to several questions, you have justified this tax on the ground that it would only be placed on the people able to pay it, and you have specified two bodies, the labourers and the shipping interests. Do you seriously suggest that there is no other alternative, for instance, taxing the ratepayers in Rangoon and taxing the industry ?—Government may do so. Our opinion is that it is the duty of Government to do it, and Government must help to build more barracks and give more accommodation to the labourers.

M-820. *The Chairman* : The members of your Chamber would be in favour of a charge being put on municipal rates, instead of upon the departing cooly ?—Yes.

M-821. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Has your Committee considered it ?—No. It is not our considered opinion. The question has only just been put to us, and we have not considered it.

M-822. *Mr. Cliff*: Is that the opinion of the representatives of the Chamber now before the Commission?—Yes.

M-823. Has any census of unemployment been taken here?—There is no regular census taken.

M-824. Your Chamber has not done it?—No.

M-825. Have you any knowledge of unemployment in the oilfields?—No.

M-826. Do you know anything about unemployment in the lead and silver mines?—No.

M-827. You have referred to disputes, lightning strikes and so on. Has your Chamber any considered opinion with regard to the recent dock strike in Rangoon?—We will send you a supplementary memorandum with regard to the recent Rangoon dock strike.

M-828. *Mr. Ahmed*: I understand that the earnings of the labourer are inadequate and that accounts for his low standard of living and extreme poverty; and you want us carefully to look into this aspect and suggest suitable steps. If the housing condition is improved, the labour will be greatly relieved from illness.

It has been suggested that only healthy people must be allowed to enter this province as labourers, but even healthy labourers fall sick on account of the bad housing conditions.

Mr. Page says that the cooly spends Rs. 5-8-0 to Rs. 6 per month on his messing under the *maistry*. I suppose on account of poverty these people live in that low style, and if we expect efficiency from them, we must uplift their condition; give them better food and housing.

They also receive no education. If they are uplifted in that direction, their ignorance will disappear, and they will not be liable to be led astray. Do you agree?—Yes.

M-829. They cannot be easily misled, and it is the primary duty of the employers to take sufficient steps for their education, so that this may not harm them?—Yes.

M-830. You are advocating that there should be a special officer, called the Commissioner, who will look after the interests of the labouring classes. We visited an industrial town yesterday at Yenangaung and found a Government Warden there. You do not want people like that. You want a special Commissioner to look after the interests of the labouring classes. The labourers have their grievances, and if the problem is properly worked out in the way suggested by you, the sufferings of these people will disappear?—Yes.

M-831. You have told us that Government has been a silent spectator. I agree with you. Therefore, it is absolutely necessary for the Government to appoint a permanent Conciliation Board to settle disputes between the employers and the employed?—Yes.

M-832. With regard to indebtedness, the employers here have not got a co-operative society to lend money to the labourers at a nominal rate of interest?—No. They do not advance money at a nominal rate of interest.

M-833. *Mr. Cliff* : Have the employers here got any co-operative loan societies ?—No. They give advances to some of the employees at times.

M-834. *Mr. Ahmed* : The labourer gets an inadequate wage and can hardly earn his living ?—Yes.

M-835. *The Chairman* : Do you say that the wages of labour in Burma are inadequate ?—Yes.

M-836. Is it the view of the employers who are members of your Association that the wages they pay are inadequate ?—I call the wages inadequate because they are paid by the day and are not employed all the days in the month.

M-837. Have the employers who are members of your Chamber taken any steps to remedy that ?—What steps can be taken when industry does not pay ?

M-838. *Mr. Ahmed* : The employers have not started any co-operative society in order to advance money to the working class at low rates of interest ?—No.

M-839. Is it not absolutely necessary that they should receive an adequate living wage ?—Yes, some steps must be taken to relieve the situation and sufficient wages must be paid to the poorer classes to enable them to earn a living.

M-840. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : Is your Chamber prepared to give a wage to the workers they employ to provide them with a sufficient standard of living to keep themselves, their wives and children ?—That depends upon the capacity of the industry ; if industry is paying, I think we ought to do it.

M-841. Out of the 4 lakhs of immigrants who come into Burma every year, 25,000 men are recruited officially by firms, and you want a protector to protect that recruited labour, but how would you deal with the 375,000 men who are not recruited but come here on their own ?—A protector of labour should be appointed, and he should protect all labour. He should report grievances to the Government of Burma, who should thereupon take steps to deal with those grievances.

M-842. Do you propose that Indian immigrant labour should be treated differently from Burmese labour ?—No, we think they should be treated equally.

M-843. Therefore any labour legislation would apply to all labour, whether imported or Burmese ?—Yes.

M-844. Would not the tax which you propose on immigrants tend to discourage immigration and thus prevent an increase of unemployment in this country ?—We have not considered that.

M-845. Where do you get the information on which you base the statement that stevedore labourers only get work on an average of about 10 days a month ?—That is from our experience. We know how many ships are coming in and how many labourers there are.

M-846. How many stevedores' labourers are there in Rangoon ?—6,000.

M-847. How many are employed at the peak of employment when most ships are coming into Rangoon ?—6,000 or 7,000 ; in fact, casual labour is drafted in and 8,000 to 9,000 people may be employed.

M-848. For how many months of the year does that state of peak employment continue ?—Two or three months ; during that time it varies.

M-849. During 2 months of the year the whole 6,000 can count on employment ?—Yes.

M-850. If, as you say, on the average they only work 10 days a month, would it not mean that there is practically no employment for stevedore labour during the remainder of the year ?—The steamers do not all come during those two months.

M-851. You say very little welfare work is done by employers and Government. What welfare measures have been undertaken by the employers who are members of your Chamber ; what have they done for the welfare of their workers ?—Practically nothing.

M-852. Do you think that employers should take action for the welfare of their employees or do you think it should be done by Government ?—If employers can afford to do it, they should ; if they cannot afford it, then Government must step in.

M-853. How would Government pay for this welfare work ?—From general taxes.

M-854. Do you suggest that business firms and industrial undertakings should be specially taxed ?—We think other bodies as well should be taxed.

M-855. You object to the Development Trust on the ground that it is a Government body ?—Yes.

M-856. It has 13 directors of whom only 5 are appointed by Government ?—We say it is a quasi-Government body ; most of its directors are appointed by Government directly or indirectly.

M-857. *The Chairman* : Do you propose that the labouring classes should be forbidden to consume alcohol and narcotic drugs ?—We are for a policy of complete prohibition applying to everybody.

M-858. Including the narcotics that are produced locally in Burma ?—Yes.

(The witnesses withdrew.)

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**Mr. C. F. GRANT, I.C.S., Chairman, Rangoon Development Trust.**

M-859. *The Chairman* : Does the whole of your revenue come from the Rs. 2 at present imposed on the departing migrant ?—No, our main revenue is from the rents of the Government estate which give us about 15½ lakhs.

M-860. What proportion does the Rs. 2 tax bear to the total of your revenue ?—It is about 4½ lakhs out of 25 lakhs.

M-861. From your present revenues is there any surplus which you could devote to housing purposes ?—None.

M-862. In what way is your existing revenue pledged ?—Our first charge is our administration and engineering staff charges which are heavy because we are a body which carries out works through reasonably skilled but not very highly qualified contractors who require a very great deal of supervision by our skilled engineering staff.

M-863. Those are engineering works which are continuing ?—Yes ; the main works are roads, drains, general equipment of areas for occupation. Reclamation used to be a main item, but is not quite so important now.

M-864. So that up to the present your duties have been confined to preparing land by way of roads, drains and so on, for use, whether residential or industrial ?—Mainly residential, but of course, whenever we get the chance, industrial. We have a very heavy debt which has got to be met ; we inherited more than 44 lakhs of debt from the old land Sale and Rent Fund ; we borrowed 57 lakhs more, and our interest and repayment charges amounted last year to nearly 8 lakhs out of a total revenue of 25 lakhs.

M-865. With regard to the proposed new tax, it is suggested to us that the Development Trust is not a suitable body for managing workmen's dwellings ?—I quite agree ; we do not propose to manage workmen's dwellings.

M-866. Your proposal, as I read it, is that you should build and then hand over to the private owner to sell ?—Yes.

M-867. Do you really consider that would be a workable proposition, that you should plan and build, and then some private person should come up proposing to make a profit out of buildings ?—If any Member of the Royal Commission will propose a more workable scheme, we shall be delighted to hear it. The scheme is one for which I have a certain responsibility, and which we have come to as being the only feasible way of doing anything at all. It is not supposed to be an ideal scheme. Undoubtedly whoever carries out a housing scheme is going to lose money by it ; it is not an economic scheme. We have to limit our liability and make it quite plain that we will not be landed in serious financial difficulties. Control of workmen's dwellings by a public body is a thing which I made quite plain to the Board from the outset I would be strongly opposed to. The practical difficulties in the way of control are very great. As a quasi-public body we could control a small number of buildings, but in such a case we would be losing a large amount of money every year and it would lay us open to every form of petty corruption and abuse.

M-868. Do you think the loss would be less if it was administered by a private body ?—I do not deal with the question of the loss being less or more, but under our present proposal we should know how much we were losing every year.

M-869. Would it simplify the problems of your Trust if the influx of immigrants to Rangoon was substantially reduced ?—The problem of overcrowding in Rangoon will not in my opinion be solved by any probable reduction in the number of immigrants ; it may be ameliorated slightly.

M-870. With regard to rest-houses, what sort of a Mission do you think should undertake their management ?—We had in mind the Ramakrishna Mission which is doing extremely useful social work in Rangoon. I think it

would command the confidence of all classes if the management of the rest house was entrusted to their hands.

M-871. Are they willing to undertake the management ?—I would not say they are willing, but I hope that the Swami would not refuse. I do not myself believe in the future of the rest house, but if the rest house fulfilled the function it is intended to fulfil, I think it would be a very valuable social work.

M-872. *Sir Alexander Murray* : What are the main principles guiding your housing improvement scheme in Rangoon ?—Here is a note which I have submitted to the Board which explains the main principles guiding the improvement scheme. (The note was handed in.)

M-873. *Mr. Cliff* : Does it include improving existing buildings also ?—No. It means putting up fresh buildings only. I am opposed to any proposals to pay for repairing or altering existing buildings.

M-874. Do you propose to put up only coolie barracks ?—No. Because if we rigorously adhered to the barrack type of quarters we should probably lose unnecessarily heavy sums ; we could not sell them at a good price. After careful consideration we have decided that the best thing would be to put up a modified form of building which cannot be correctly described as barracks but which could and would be used for housing coolies. The main idea is to increase the amount of accommodation available in Rangoon and let natural laws take their effect.

M-875. Do you incur extravagant expenditure in the construction of rest houses and other buildings ?—No, I do not admit that we are extravagant in anything. We publish our reports and accounts every year. Our accounts are audited, and nobody has told us that we are extravagant.

M-876. Have you raised rents abnormally high ?—No, we have only charged economic rents.

M-877. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : How do your building costs compare with those of private contractors ?—We might reduce our engineering staff costs if a good engineering firm was found which would carry out our major works. But our works are mostly ordinary works such as drains and roads, and the cheapest way to do that class of work is through contractors without any technical qualifications, supervised by our permanent technical staff.

M-878. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Is it right to suggest that a quasi-Government body like the Trust would readily agree to have liquor shops opened near Trust buildings ?—It is a far fetched suggestion. I have not heard of any question of siting liquor shops on land vested in the Trust all the time I have been Chairman.

M-879. Has any attempt been made to push the coolie population into the outskirts of the city ?—No serious attempt has been made to my knowledge. The special committee appointed by the Board to consider the suggested housing scheme considered this question, and decided that it was impracticable to house the coolies outside the town and take them in and out by means of buses. Also, water supply and systems of drainage are lacking in the outlying parts of the town. All things considered, it is better for the coolies to

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live near the places where they work. Our activities are to be confined, at any rate to begin with, to the sewered area where the coolies are now actually living. The draft Bill and the notes I have submitted to you contain the general principles on which we are prepared to proceed with the housing scheme.

M-880. *Mr. Birla* : Is this Trust a *quasi*-Government body ; who has the final voice on matters connected with it ?—The Trust is a public body with a non-official majority. It was created by an Act of the Local Government under whose control it works. It administers the Government Estate which gives it two-thirds of its income. Its budget has to be passed by the Local Government. It is free to act within the limits of the Act and it can spend up to the amounts sanctioned in the budget, provided no specific work exceeds Rs. 2,00,000 in value.

M-881. What have you realized from the Rs. 2 tax on persons going out of Burma ?—I think about Rs. 4,00,000 annually.

M-882. Has all this sum been spent on the development of the area under the jurisdiction of the Trust ?—The proceeds of this tax are used for the development of main roads and main drains.

M-883. What was the object of levying this tax on passengers going out of Rangoon ?—The proceeds of this tax, in addition to an annual contribution of Rs. 1,00,000 from the Rangoon Corporation and the proceeds of the extra stamp duty on the registration of documents in respect of lands in the city of Rangoon, go to a General Development Fund. These provisions were based on the Calcutta Act.

M-884. Could you spend any money on building houses ?—We could not as we stand at present. It would require an amendment of the Act which we are trying to bring about.

M-885. *Mr. Tyabji* : Have you not raised your rents by 30 to 100 per cent. during the renewal ?—I think you are referring to block I (1). The present rent is only 5 per cent. of the proved leasehold value of the land.

M-886. But does not the increase work out to a high percentage ?—It does, because 30 years ago the land was given out at nominal rents, and during the intervening period the value of the land has increased ten-fold.

M-887. Will not some of your houses be bought by the landlords ?—Yes, it is quite possible.

M-888. In that case will they not rent them to the labourers at the same high rate which prevails in the neighbourhood ?—Yes, they will.

M-889. Then what does the labourer gain by your building more houses and selling them to the landlords at a loss ?—He would not gain immediately, but the amount of available accommodation would be steadily increased.

M-890. *Mr. Cliff* : What is the extent of the slum area that your Trust has cleared and what is the population that it has newly settled or re-settled ?—I will get the figures for you.

M-891. How many do you propose to accommodate in the new houses ?—33,000 people in 10 years.

M-892. Are you going to confine yourself to the sewered area?—We propose to begin with the sewered area where the coolies actually live now and slowly proceed outwards and take them out of the congested area.

M-893. Will the proceeds of the tax be enough to cover the loss incurred by the sale of houses at a loss?—Yes, we should see that the loss did not exceed the proceeds of the tax.

M-894. Is it not likely that you would be housing in these buildings people who are not taxed?—We should have no control over the buildings once we had sold them.

M-895. Would you not then be taxing certain members of the population for housing certain other members of the population who are not being taxed?—Certainly, but we cannot guarantee that the man who pays the tax and goes out of Burma will come back and occupy the houses we build.

M-896. What direct benefit have the paying class received from the Rs. 2 tax which is in operation?—It was not intended to benefit them directly; there is the indirect benefit they get from improved communications and drainage and health conditions in Rangoon.

M-897. With regard to improved housing which is necessary in Rangoon, is there no possibility of taxing the general citizen of Rangoon?—The general citizen in Rangoon already pays a fairly adequate municipal tax, and the immigrant labourer does not contribute much to the municipal funds of Rangoon. He gets a good deal out of Burma without paying very much for it. For instance, the immigrant labourer living in Rangoon does not pay capitation tax which would be more than the Rs. 2 charge he pays.

M-898. You employ a fair number of contractors, I take it?—Yes.

M-899. Would you be opposed to the insertion in your contracts of what is known in England as a fair wages clause?—That is to say, it would be a statutory obligation on all public bodies and private employers who gave out any work on contract that they should insert a fair wages clause?

M-900. It would be an obligation on the contracting party of your Development Trust to observe the fair wages clause?—If it were to apply to the Trust and to public bodies only then I should object, but if you make it compulsory in the case of all public bodies and private employers I see no objection to it.

M-901. *Mr. Ahmed*: From the reply given by you to one of the questions put by one of my colleagues it appears that your administration is a top heavy administration?—I do not remember admitting that.

M-902. I put it to you that your administration is a top heavy one and that the poor labourers do not get any benefit from your Trust as far as their housing is concerned?—That is a matter of opinion.

M-903. Do you wish to contradict my opinion?—I simply confine myself to saying that I regret I cannot agree with you.

M-904. You realize a poll tax of Rs. 2 from each labourer. May we know what return they get from this tax?—Better roads and better drainage.

M-905. Do you not think it would be advisable if the money realized from this tax was spent only on the improvement of the housing conditions of the labourers ?

M-906. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : You have no powers under the present Act to deal with housing ?—No.

M-907. *Mr. Ahmed* : Would you recommend the levy of a terminal tax at a higher rate on all those who come here, especially the rich mercantile community ?

*The Chairman* : This tax of Rs. 2 is levied on all male passengers departing from Rangoon, and the tax on a saloon passenger is three times that on a deck passenger in your draft bill ?—That is so.

M-908. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : Supposing you were not dealing particularly with labour but you were generally to develop the out-skirts of Rangoon from the point of view of sewered areas would not you then perhaps attract classes living in congested areas and thus free those areas for the labouring class ?—The present water-supply of the municipality does not permit of any extension of the sewered area, and until we have a greatly increased water-supply we cannot have any material extension of that area.

M-909. If you had the increased water-supply could you deal with the congestion in that way ?—That is a hypothetical question, and therefore it is difficult to give an answer. I think it would be very doubtful, and it would be a matter of a good many years before you would know to what extent people would move out. If they would move out it would be a great improvement of the situation, but we certainly have not found that people are willing to leave the heart of the city.

M-910. What persons are you referring to ?—I am not talking primarily of the manual labourer, but of those who might be able to afford the expenses of suburban residence.

M-911. I was told that there is a large number who would move out if they could get amenities ?—There are serious difficulties in the way of getting people to move out, because they have in the centre of the town cinemas, schools, bazaars and other conveniences.

M-912. We have had certain figures provided by the Burma Indian Chamber of Commerce as to the density of the population in these crowded parts. Can you give us figures so that we may check them ?—I am afraid not. You find some relevant figures in the report regarding the effect of the removal of rental control, but even those figures are not very satisfactory. Until the census comes out we really cannot supply any reliable figures.

M-913. You cannot call those figures accurate. At present you have no basis on which you or anybody else could collect figures ?—Quite so.

M-914. *The Chairman* : It appears to be a fact, and not contradicted, that in the housing of the Indian coolies in particular the bye laws are not observed ?—Yes.

M-915. In your estimates of the cost of the proposed buildings under the new Bill have you assumed that the bye laws will be broken equally in your

new buildings, or have you assumed that they will be observed?—I assume that they will fall into line with the treatment given to other buildings in the same area.

M-916. Then you have not made any special provision that the bye laws shall be observed there?—No.

M-917. Would it not be setting up a bad example if buildings built under semi-public auspices proceeded to allow 50 people to crowd in a place where the bye law said there should be 10?—The buildings when so used will not belong to us, and I am not hoping to create a new heaven and a new earth. I do not see how one set of owners can possibly adhere to regulations which other people do not adhere to, and run their building on an economic basis.

M-918. I see the difficulty but still you would be what I believe the lawyers call an accessory?—I agree from a legal point of view. I do not think we should really be responsible at all, but I quite agree that, if it is not possible to get a rigid or at any rate a much more rigid adherence to public health bye laws, we cannot hope for much improvement. We hope to build enough houses to enable the public health authorities to use their powers without having cases of unquestioned hardship brought to their notice. For instance, if you turn out in the rains all the cockles who are sheltering in a room because it is overcrowded they will have no place to go to. But if you create more buildings this difficulty to a great extent will be obviated.

M-919. Your opinion is that this scheme will help the health authorities to put into force the bye laws?—I hope so.

(The witness withdrew).

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**BURMA.****Sixth Meeting.****RANGOON.***Friday, 31st October 1930.***PRESENT :**The Rt. Hon'ble J. H. WHITLEY (*Chairman*).

SIR VICTOR SASSOON, Bart.

SIR ALEXANDER MURRAY, KT., C.B.E.

MR. A. G. CLOW, C.I.E., I.C.S.

MR. KABIR-UD-DIN AHMED, Bar-at-Law.

MR. G. D. BIRLA.

MR. JOHN CLIFF.

LT.-COL. A. J. H. RUSSELL, C.B.E.,  
I.M.S. (*Medical Assessor*).

MR. J. TAIT

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} *Assistant Commissioners.*MRS. TE TE LUCE (*Lady Assessor*).

MR. S. LALL, I.C.S.

MR. A. DIBDIN

} *Joint Secretaries.*

**Mr. S. A. S. TYABJI, Mr. ABDUL BARI CHAUDHARI, Mr. E. P. PILLAY,**  
and **Dr. P. A. NAIR**, representatives of Indian Labour in Burma.

M-920. *The Chairman* : Mr. Tyabji, who are the representatives, besides yourself, of Indian labour in Burma who have submitted this memorandum ?—When we learnt about three months ago that the Royal Commission on Labour was coming to Burma, knowing how disorganized Indian labour was at the time, we felt it necessary that some sort of a temporary organisation should be created to collect such facts and materials as may be of use to the Commission. We therefore immediately called a meeting of labourers in Rangoon, and at that meeting we elected a committee of persons who were either employers with large views on labour questions or who, though not being employers of labour, had been in some way connected with the labour movement in Burma. We appointed a committee consisting of Raja Reddiar, a large employer of labour and a very beneficent man, Mr. Abdul Bari Chaudhari, who is the President of the Labour Association which has been working for about 10 or 12 years now.

M-921. Are those Indian labourers ?—Yes. Then there were myself Mr. Venkatasami, who is nominated member in the Legislative Council representing labour, Mr. E. P. Pillay, who is an elected member of the Legislative Council, mostly on labour votes, Dr. Nair, who is the President of the Postal and Telegraph Menials Association and Mr. Kolande. So that, about 10 or 12 of us were appointed for the purpose of collecting such information as we thought would be useful to the Commission and with a view to bring out what we considered to be the salient factors with regard to labour problems in Burma.

Although we know that it is not primarily our duty to find out ways and means, which is the special purpose of the Royal Commission, still we have made bold to make such suggestions as we thought might be of some value to the Commission. If they are right, they would be of so much more value ; if they are wrong, perhaps their fallacy would help the Commission in finding out the right ways. I trust the Commission will understand that it is only a labour of love that we are doing, and we do not in any way think that the memorandum we have presented is perfect in all ways.

M-922. We understand now clearly that it is submitted by a group of Indians who have taken the lead in thinking about and working for the interests of Indian labour in Burma ?—Yes.

M-923. It does not represent any permanent organization except in so far as one or two of the individuals are at the head of other organizations ?—No. We had about three Presidents of different labour associations in this committee.

M-924. You have spoken of a labour association of which the president is at present with you. How far is it a living body at the present time ? Does it collect subscriptions ? Is it in any sense a trade union ?—It is not a trade union. It is a living body. It collects subscriptions, and in its own way it is doing good work.

M-925. What is its purpose ?—Till now it has mostly concerned itself with the labour which comes from Chittagong and Bengal side, although its intention is to make itself more cosmopolitan.

M-926. Does it have a membership amongst the actual workers ?—Yes, it has a membership of nearly 16,000.

M-927. And that body is not asked to submit its views separately ; they are found in the memorandum which you have submitted ?—Yes, because the President himself is with us.

M-928. You have suggested the appointment in Burma by the Central Government of a Protector of Immigrants or Labour Commissioner and also the appointment of officers in the recruiting areas in the countries from which this great volume of labour comes. Is it your suggestion that they should be paid by their respective Governments, or that they should, on the analogy of Ceylon, be paid out of the fund which was really raised by the employers who were going to employ the labour ?—As we look at the problem, we see two distinct sides to the question : one is the purely recruited labour, which is recruited in India.

M-929. That is about 20,000 or thereabouts ?—Yes. With regard to labour recruited in India, we suggest that some type of agency should be created, before which the agreements, loans, etc., may be made. With regard to Southern India, from where a very large amount of labour goes to Ceylon, we were thinking that perhaps the same agencies which are serving Ceylon might also be able to serve Burma, because of the small number of about 20,000 people coming from Madras side as recruited labour.

M-930. But do not the Telugus come from another part of Madras ?—They come from Ganjam, Godavari, the Northern Sircars. At the time we

did not go into this. It was a chance idea that the agencies which serve Ceylon may be able to serve this purpose also. The point regarding labour which comes to Burma from a different part did not strike us at the time. With regard to Bihar and Orissa and other places, so far as we know, very little recruited labour comes from there. So that, in our opinion, the question of appointing the agencies really may not arise.

M-931. With regard to the 300,000 who come over here of their own accord and at their own charge in search of employment, is it your suggestion that control should be imposed upon that migration?—No.

M-932. The group of people for whom you speak are in favour of the free entry, with the exception of some restrictions placed on recruitment by *maistries*?—Yes, because we found that the labourers themselves have thrown off the system of recruitment by *maistries* to a certain extent.

M-933. You will see the difference between recruitment by *mistris* and recruitment by some semi-public body as is the case in Ceylon, which sets itself up to abolish the evils that were admitted under the *mistri* system?—Even if we could eliminate the evils of the *maistry* system and have instead a system similar to that of Ceylon, what comes in the way of recruitment is the seasonal type of labour that is generally prevailing in Burma. Almost every trade is seasonal.

M-934. The great bulk of these Indian workers who come for periods between two to three years at a time leave their wives and families behind them in their country. Do you and your friends, as leaders of Indian opinion in Burma, wish that they brought their wives and children with them for the periods they spend here, or do you think, on the whole, taking the balance of things, it is better that the wives and children should stay behind in the country?—However much we may think it to be desirable that the family should be with them, conditions in each type of labour are so very different that we have not been able to make up our mind as to what can be done with regard to the question.

M-935. *Mr. Cliff*: Is there some difficulty in the way in Burma, or is the difficulty in India, or in both places?—The difficulty is in both places. In many cases there are the family lands and children to be looked after. If the families come over here, the impermanence of labour, the length of time during which the labourers very often have to remain unemployed, the type of work which takes them to unhealthy places, the distances which they have to go forwards and backwards between the rice milling season and the rice agricultural period necessitate their leaving their families behind somewhere, they themselves going in another direction. These are matters which make it difficult for us to say as to where the balance is.

M-936. *The Chairman*: From what you have already said, I take it that the provision of family quarters to which Indians could bring their wives and children would affect only a small proportion of the whole?—I believe so.

M-937. That is for the reasons you have just given, that they are moving about very largely?—Yes.

M-938. Should I be correct in suggesting a further factor, that there would not be work for the women folk in the occupations which the men follow when

they come over here, whereas there is no doubt there is some little work for them in their country on the land where they stay?—I believe that would be correct if any large number of Indian women were concerned.

M-939. I am thinking for the moment comparatively, say, with the cotton mills in Bombay or the jute mills in Bengal, where there is a substantial amount of work for women. You do not see anything of that kind in Burma which would lead Indian labourers to think it worth the risk, and in addition to the causes you have already mentioned I take it that in the case of large bodies of labourers like the Oriyas, for instance, there is a religious difficulty which is one of the causes for leaving the women behind?—That is so.

M-940. Regarding indebtedness, you have drawn attention to the evils of the *mistri* system, where there is an advance offered by the *maistry* and taken by the man before he leaves his home and which hangs round his neck and perhaps increases during the period of his work in Burma. Apart from your suggestion of an officer to countersign the receipt for any such advance, you make an interesting suggestion that no one should be allowed to advance or to borrow (I am not quite sure which) more than what could be paid off within six months. Do you mean more than six months' wages?—We mean that he should not be given a loan of more than three months' wages.

M-941. Have you considered how this suggestion could be put into a statute?—We have not thought about it.

M-942. At present the law courts are pretty busy in making attachments against wages and salaries for recovery of money-lenders' debts; is that the fact in Burma?—Yes.

M-943. Does that affect the Indian labourers?—Yes.

M-944. Would you be in favour of abolishing that power?—Yes.

M-945. Do you think that would give a certain amount of relief or help in the way of lessening the volume of lending?—I believe so.

M-946. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: Are your suggestions for the appointment of a Protector of Labour limited to recruited labour and not to the free labour?—There are two portions of it. One portion of the agencies on the other side of the Bay of Bengal refers to that part of labour which is recruited in India, and the suggestions with regard to Burma itself are with reference to both, that is, the labour that is recruited in India and comes over here and the labour which comes free to Burma.

M-947. You restrict it to Indian labour only?—Yes. We have restricted ourselves to Indian labour, because we know the conditions of Indian labour more accurately.

M-948. But the protector could not protect the labourers any more than they can be protected by anybody else under the ordinary law of the land?—That is not so in my opinion. There are many laws with regard to labour which are broken. There are many moral laws also which are broken, and the Protector that we have in view would not only enforce the legal laws, but would take care of labour and its problems.

M-949. He would put into force existing laws in favour of Indian labour. But how could he put into force against employers what you call moral laws?

Could you give an example?—Take, for instance, the question of liquor shops at the doors of factories. That is a sort of problem regarding which we have been agitating in Burma for ever so long, and we cannot get rid of the liquor shops in front of the factory doors. If there was a Protector of Labour, he would be in a position to get facts and figures with regard to what each shop was doing.

M-950. Your point really is that he would collect evidence which may enable the law of the province to be altered?—Yes.

M-951. Does your memorandum mean that there should be statutory provision that every employer of labour employing more than 100 men should provide housing for 100 per cent. of his staff?—We should like to see that done.

M-952. Do you think that practical in the case of seasonal labour, where a great deal of casual labour may be wanted for certain periods of the year and none for other parts of the year; take, for instance, stevedore labour where I understand several thousands are wanted in the first three or four months of the year, but very few in the other months of the year?—I quite agree that the suggestion as worded is rather vague; I am only referring to factory labour, because that labour is a very compact body and they are more or less permanently in one employment.

M-953. What about rice mills?—In rice mills I think almost everywhere up country the very large majority of labour is housed while it is working in the rice mill.

M-954. Do you differentiate between a factory up country, which is isolated, and a factory in a town like Rangoon?—I think it would also be advisable, from labour's point of view, in the case of a town.

M-955. Would this housing be provided free of charge to labour?—I should think so.

M-956. If that is so, you quite appreciate that the employer would limit it to those who were actually working for him, and would insist on the right of evicting men he dismissed from his employment?—Yes.

M-957. You would allow that?—Yes.

M-958. I do not know whether you are aware of the fact that in other countries labour leaders consider it is rather too much power to put into the hands of employers, and there is a feeling that work people should be allowed to house themselves where they wish: that they should not be dependent on housing provided by employers?—I appreciate that may be so in countries where labour problems have passed the stage at which they are at present in Burma.

M-959. You realize that I am limiting my questions to towns?—Yes. So far as Burma is concerned, the question of housing labour has been agitating the minds of the people for about 10 years, but neither the Corporation nor the Government has shown itself active in the matter. If we wait till employees in factories are provided with housing by Government or the municipalities, I do not know how long we shall have to wait.

M-960. Do you think it is a practical proposition, as things are now, for a town like Rangoon, to make it a statutory duty on everybody employing 101 people in a factory to provide housing; would they be in a position to supply housing?—I will deal with the matter on a practical basis. Almost every saw mill here has some type of accommodation for its employees; the rice mills have a considerable amount of accommodation for their employees; I think the oil refineries have housing accommodation for about half their employees; the rope factories provide a certain amount of accommodation; there are I think 3 or 4 match factories and one of them has provided very considerable accommodation.

M-961. So that you think, generally speaking, they have got enough land on which they could house the balance of their people without any real difficulty?—I believe so.

M-962. In your memorandum you quote certain figures given by Dr. Dalal. Have those figures been checked by your people in any way; do you understand them at all?—No; we have no material.

M-963. You appreciate the difficulty one has in trying to understand them?—Yes.

M-964. We had better ask Dr. Dalal about those figures, as you cannot help us?—Yes.

M-965. I take it that outside monsoon periods the overcrowding of houses in Rangoon is not actual, in that a large number of the inhabitants would probably be sleeping out, as they do in other parts in the cities, only using the room as a place in which to keep their belongings?—That is so.

M-966. *Mr. Cliff*: Does that mean they are homeless?—Practically, except that I would qualify that statement by saying that their boxes have homes, but not them.

M-967. The room is a repository?—Yes.

M-968. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: That would mean that they would actually find it necessary to sleep in those rooms, because they need shelter, only during the monsoon period, which would extend over how much of the year?—From about the middle of May to about November.

M-969. A large number of these men would not be employed, or only employed a few days in the week, during that period, would they not, from what we have been told?—They may not be employed very regularly in their own sphere of labour, but a very large number would find small jobs here and there.

M-970. So that generally speaking your view is that those who are not employed in their real occupation in those out of season months are in a position to make a livelihood by a secondary occupation?—I do not know whether they make enough to make a livelihood.

M-971. *The Chairman*: Shall we say a precarious livelihood?—Yes.

M-972. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: Would you consider it a good thing for them to come to Rangoon only during the period in which they can be fairly fully employed, leaving Rangoon during the off season, making it really a seasonal

trade?—That brings us up against other problems; for instance, what would be the number of workers who would be required during the monsoon.

M-973. Might not that difficulty be overcome by employers maintaining a permanent labour force all through the year, taking on additional casual labour when there was more work?—We should like that to be so, because we say there is too little permanent labour; but then, would it pay the labourer to pay his fare backwards and forwards for 6 months?

M-974. In other parts of India where they admittedly have no secondary occupation, they find that it does pay them, because the cost of living in their villages is so much less than in the towns. You say they have a secondary occupation, which may make it worth their while to stop?—It is just possible that the small amount they earn in that way may make a difference as to whether it is worth their while to incur the cost of coming and going.

M-975. If something of that kind could be done, it would relieve the overcrowding of houses during the monsoon period?—Yes, it would; but I think it would be very difficult to arrange that, so many other factors come in. For instance, the labour force which comes here to the rice mills could not go away for the monsoon period because the work of the rice mills is not over before the monsoon. When the work of the rice mills is finished, a good deal of the workers go out to do agricultural work.

M-976. So that they really have sufficient employment throughout the year?—Some of them have. Out of the 4 lakhs we calculate that a lakh of Indians go in for agricultural work.

M-977. Is there any agreement here as to what is the period of seasonal labour, which I take it would vary from industry to industry?—That is so. A rice mill in one district may close before a rice mill in another district.

M-978. Do not answer this question if you would rather not: have you any views as to the difference of efficiency between Indian labour and Burmese labour under the same conditions here?—In certain types of work the Burmese labour cannot be beaten, for instance, in the forests, and in the industries where they have to do more skilled manual operations. On the railways, in road making they are not found satisfactory, but as carpenters, blacksmiths, fitters and in the machine shops they are very good. Any very long and continuous work does not suit them very well; they want breaks in their work.

M-979. *Mr. Ahmed*: You feel that the cost of carrying out the improvement of the housing of the workers should be met by the employers, because it is for the benefit of the employers that the workers have come here and placed themselves in these miserable conditions?—So far as the labour is concerned, leaving aside all questions of principle, it is beggar's choice I think.

M-980. But in your opinion employers should come forward and provide housing accommodation?—Yes; a very large number of industrial organizations here have provided some sort of housing, and I believe they are in a position to provide more.

M-981. With regard to welfare you say in your memorandum that the employers supply nothing, there is no agency, no provision of refreshment shelters; with regard to physical culture, recreation and amusement nothing is given to them; the result achieved is nothing?

M-982. *The Chairman* : After your visits with us in the last few days would you hold to this?—Not entirely.

M-983. *Mr. Ahmed* : I visited with you some of the housing accommodation of Messrs. Steel Brothers ; that is very regrettable and ought to be altered?—I think it ought to be improved.

M-984. You have given figures indicating that an unskilled labourer in factories gets an average pay of Rs. 22-8-0 per month.

*Sir Victor Sassoon* : Does that include free housing?

*The Chairman* : You mean Rs. 22-8-0 in cash?—Yes; it might or might not include free housing.

M-985. *Mr. Ahmed* : I expect you have considerable knowledge as to the cost of living here ; in your opinion is that Rs. 22-8-0 sufficient to cover the cost of living of a worker, his wife and two children, whether the wife and children are in this country or have been left in India by an Indian immigrant?—In our opinion it is not very much.

M-986. And more is necessary to provide a living wage for the maintenance of the worker, his wife and children?—The more we can get the better.

M-987. *The Chairman* : How does this Rs. 22-8-0 compare in your opinion with their earnings in their own country before they come here?—I have no idea.

M-988. *Mr. Ahmed* : So Rs. 22-8-0 is not sufficient for the maintenance of himself, his wife and children?—It depends upon several factors ; it depends upon his debts and whether he gets fairly continuous employment.

M-989. *The Chairman* : And how much he spends on drink?—That is another factor, and how much he spends on doctor's bills.

M-990. *Mr. Ahmed* : But excluding drink and other luxuries, is Rs. 22-8-0 sufficient for the maintenance of his wife and two children?—No. I do not say it is insufficient in every case ; I say it depends very largely on conditions. If a man is fairly steady, does not drink, is careful of himself and has regular work, he may be able to live here and send some money to India.

M-991. But the sum he will send to his wife and children in India will not be sufficient?—I could not say.

M-992. *Mr. Cliff* : Is not there a Protector of Immigrants here in Burma?—Yes.

M-993. Does he not meet the need which you put forward in your memorandum?—He falls short of what we desire.

M-994. In what way does he fall short?—Generally he is an officer of the Government of Burma, and naturally it is our sentiment that, things being as they are, he can hardly be expected to be a strong labour man in view of the European interests and other large vested interests in Burma and Rangoon. During the last strike we did not find him doing anything particular with regard to the protection of Indian immigrant labour.

M-995. In the last strike all labour at the time of the strike was Indian, was it not?—Yes. With regard to the drink question, in our opinion he is not

strong enough to fight the Excise Department of the Government. In our opinion, therefore, what we want is a man with a bigger status, a man whom the Government of Burma would look upon with a greater amount of respect, as would also the Government of India.

M-996. *The Chairman*: I take it you want a man who would have no other duties?—We wish he would have no other duty except that of taking care of labour interests.

M-997. *Mr. Cliff*: You want that the Protector should in times of dispute prefer and voice the claims of labour?—Yes.

M-998. Why do you say that the Protector of Immigrants is susceptible to pressure from European employers?—I cannot prove it, but that is my feeling about the matter.

M-999. *Sir Alexander Murray*: Then it is his fault and not the fault of the employers?—Yes, primarily it is his fault.

M-1000. *Mr. Cliff*: Did you or any other representative of Indian labour put forward the case of Indian labour before the employers or the Protector of Immigrants during the last riots?—Many of our members were out every day doing what we could. The Indian Chamber of Commerce here in which some of us are members interviewed the Government. We also interviewed the stevedores.

M-1001. Did the representatives of Indian labour make any representations when the Government suggested a settlement and asked the conciliation committee to work it out?—No. The time was such that we felt that nothing could be done.

M-1002. Were you consulted by Government?—No.

M-1003. *U Aye Maung*: Was not the settlement arrived at after consulting the representatives of Indian labour, the stevedores, the representatives of Burmese labour and the Shipping Agencies?—I believe there was some such consultation.

M-1004. *Mr. Cliff*: Have you or any of your friends any considerable experience of Indian industrial labour in Burma, and if so are you recognized in Government circles as representatives of Indian labour?—Some of us do take an active part in movements connected with Indian labour; but as a rule such persons are not looked upon with favour by the Government.

M-1005. With regard to trade unions, have you any instances to show that European concerns have generally been antagonistic to the formation of trade unions?—For instance, we saw that the Burma Corporation at Namtu was not in favour of the establishment of trade unions.

M-1006. But you wrote this memorandum before we visited Namtu. What is the basis of your statement in the memorandum?—I know that the Burma Railways, the Irrawady Flotilla Company, and the Burmah Oil Company are all against the formation of unions of their workers.

M-1007. Have you ever tried to form a union of the workers in these industries?—Attempts have been made, but the leaders of the movement, were at once dismissed.

M-1008. Have you or any of your workers been shadowed by the Criminal Investigation Department?—Yes. When the appointment of the Royal Commission was announced we began to work to collect materials for the Commission. We were then shadowed by the C. I. D.

M-1009. Who are the main consumers of opium?—The Indian and the Chinese workers. The Burmans do not consume opium.

M-1010. Does Government get any large revenue from opium?—It gets Rs. 50,00,000 in Burma alone.

M-1011. With regard to drink, have the representatives of Indian labour put forward any suggestion concerning the restriction of hours of sale, the number and the location of shops and so on?—There is a Municipal Advisory Committee in Rangoon which has put forward many useful suggestions before the Excise Commissioner. Many resolutions have been proposed in the Legislative Council, but none could be passed because of Government opposition through fear of losing revenue.

M-1012. *Colonel Russell*: What was your general impression of the physique of the labourers such as we saw this morning?—I think their physique was good.

M-1013. Have you made any investigation of the diet of these labourers?—I have not made any detailed investigations myself, but my impression is that they do not get enough.

M-1014. Have you any detailed suggestions to make with regard to a housing scheme for labourers in Rangoon?—I should like to see a number of houses put up near Ahlone where the land has been reclaimed. The sewerage area is very near to that site and sewers could easily be extended there. Tubewells can be sunk for water supply and the Hlawga lake water can be utilized for the sewerage.

M-1015. Have you any suggestion to make as regards increased medical facilities for the labouring classes in Rangoon?—I have no detailed suggestions to make, but I may say that Government might give more grants to free dispensaries like the Ramakrishna Mission dispensary which is giving free medical aid to labourers.

M-1016. Has the Provincial Public Health Board any power to interfere with the public health administration in Rangoon?—No, it has no jurisdiction in Rangoon.

M-1017. Which are the 2 or 3 factories where you say children are admitted against the rules?—I am sorry it is wrong.

M-1018. *U Hla Bu*: Do you know of any means by which the formation of trade unions can be encouraged without fear of victimization?—There should be a Government Labour Bureau with an able and independent officer who will see that labour is given fair play and no obstacles are put in the path of organizing unions.

M-1019. Is it not a fact that ten years ago Indian labourers were not employed in Upper Burma, but recently they have gone to Upper Burma and thus caused unemployment among Burmese labourers?—I am not aware of it.

M-1020. *U Aye Maung*: The Government Memorandum says that the dietary and physique of the Burman labourer is superior to that of the Indian labourer. Therefore would not the Burman labourer be more efficient than an Indian labourer?—It depends on the type of work. Take loading and unloading ships; it requires not merely physique but also some skill. If the Burman labourer is trained to the same standard as the Indian labourer he may become equally efficient.

M-1021. Do you not think that the unemployment problem here can be materially solved if some check is placed at the source and only that number which is required by the employers is allowed to come?—That is a most complicated problem. For instance, on what basis is any check to be placed on the migration; would the check be on the basis of occupation on, say, earth workers who come from Orissa, or on the shipping labour; if you reduce the shipping labour to what extent can it be reduced, because when the shipping labour is not working as such it is doing some other subsidiary work. If the labour is reduced beyond a certain limit it would not only affect the shipping labour but would also affect the subsidiary labour. In the same way if you reduce the rice mill labour it might affect the cultivation labour.

M-1022. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: Are the secondary occupations enough to give the labour which is unemployed in the main occupations a living during the year?—It is not possible to say.

M-1023. *The Chairman*: May I take it what you mean is this that the case of Burma as compared with that of Ceylon is very different? The diversity of occupations and of employers even in the case of some men during a single year adds a complication which is not present in the case of Ceylon or Malay where the employers are more or less a compact body and are able to indicate what the needs of their industry are?—Yes.

M-1024. *U Aye Maung*: Do the coolies who come to Burma of their free will decide amongst themselves before they leave India as to the particular industries in which they should seek employment?—The labour which was working, say, in the shipping line would naturally come back to the same line and attach itself to the same labour contractor.

M-1025. Do you then mean to say that the same people come over and over again and there are no new recruits?—No. What I say is that the new recruits naturally take to the same trade that their friends of the same village have taken up.

M-1026. *Mr. Tait*: From your experience as an employer of labour and taking into consideration the present depressed condition of trade in Burma and also the cost of living in Burma, what would you say is a fair monthly wage for an unskilled coolie?—Is it not rather an unfair question to put to the representative of an organization which has come to represent labour here?

M-1027. I merely want to get an idea as to what you think is a reasonable wage?—I think it is about Rs. 27-8-0.

M-1028. You say that a stevedoring coolie working for only 10 days in a month earns Rs. 17-8-0 and another Rs. 10 from other sources of labour. So that on your own admission the average coolie working on stevedoring work

to-day is getting a fair wage ?—He is not getting a fair wage from his sphere of employment ; he gets that Rs. 10 from subsidiary work.

M-1029. It does not matter where he gets his earnings from so long as his earnings represent a fair wage ?—Our point is that he does not get a fair wage from the sphere of labour to which he is attached.

M-1030. *Sir Alexander Murray*: There is always a surplus in dock labour ?—I believe so.

M-1031. *Mr. Tait*: You think that a coolie who is earning Rs. 23 or 24 a month in casual work, in mills, in the bazaars and on earth work, is really being paid a reasonable wage ?—No, because he does not get permanent labour.

M-1032. If he works for 20 days in a month more or less permanently and still gets Rs. 24 a month he has nothing to complain about ?—If he can get it, but the point is whether he does get it.

M-1033. It does not matter to you, does it, whether he gets Rs. 24 for 30 days work or for 20 days work so long as he gets Rs. 24 ?—I think that if a labourer could get about Rs. 24 a month throughout the year it would be a fair wage.

M-1034. *Mr. Cliff*: Are you in favour of a minimum wage of Rs. 24 for all labour ?—Yes.

M-1035. *Mr. Tait*: Would the minimum for an Indian worker be different from the minimum for a Burman worker ?—My own idea is that it is not different.

M-1036. You think that there is no difference in the standard of living between the average Indian coolie and the average Burman coolie ?—No.

M-1037. You therefore dispute Mr. Bennison's budget figures ?—I dispute them from the point of view of the definition of cost of living.

M-1038. *Sir Alexander Murray*: Do you think that a Burman requires more money to live comfortably than an Indian ?—The point is whether luxuries come within the question of standard of living. Suppose two men draw the same amount of pay and one wears a cotton *lungi* while the other a silk one.

M-1039. *Mr. Tait*: Never mind about the luxuries ; take into account only the essentials ?—I do not think that the cost of living is different.

M-1040. You do not think that an Indian coolie who is a vegetarian and does not eat fish or meat is different from a Burman coolie who eats both these things ?—I do not think there is much difference.

M-1041. With regard to your suggestion for the establishment of a minimum wage board, will you give us an idea as to how this board should operate throughout the province of Burma ?—You have, for instance, the Irrawaddy river trade. The board would decide as to what the lowest wage of the *khalasis* should be, what minimum should a fireman or a serang get ; in other words, the board would decide the wages for each class of labour in all trades.

M-1042. Would Rangoon be on a different basis from Nantu, for instance ?—May probably be.

M-1043. *Sir Alexander Murray*: Would Syriam be different from Rangoon?  
—No.

M-1044. *Mr. Tait*: Are you aware that the labour in the forest camps is indigenous to the district?—I am.

M-1045. So that the mere fact that the district is malarious has nothing whatever to do with the industry concerned?—Although the labour is indigenous it lives in villages which are not amidst the timber forests, and has as a rule open ground round it.

M-1046. *Mrs. Luce*: I think you said that Burman coolies employed on road making are not as good as Indian coolies?—I do not think I said that. What I said was that Burman coolies did not prefer that kind of work but that they were particularly good in certain spheres of labour.

M-1047. You think that they are not as good as Indian coolies because they do not like this long and continuous work?—That is my experience.

M-1048. Are you aware that in the out-skirts of Rangoon and also in some other districts a number of big contractors have engaged Burman coolies, both men and women, for road making and they find that the labour is very satisfactory?—I am very glad to hear that.

M-1049. You will admit, I take it, that Burmese men and women are just as strong as Indian coolies are?—I believe they are just as strong and just as clever as Indian coolies are.

M-1050. Do you think they are even superior to Indian coolies in physique?—That I am not prepared to say.

M-1051. Would you like to see them encouraged in all spheres of work?—Yes.

M-1052. *Mr. Birla*: Does it reflect great credit on the relations between Indian employers and Indian employees that you employers should have come here to advocate the cause of Indian workers?—It is for the Commission to judge that.

M-1053. Does it show that the Indian employer irrespective of his own interest is always prepared to play a fair game?—I hope so.

M-1054. *Sir Alexander Murray*: Do you think that Indian employers treat their labour better than European employers?—There are some cases in which they do and in some they do not.

M-1055. *Mr. Birla*: Leaving aside the question whether it was practicable or not, would you suggest that in the interest of Indian labourers and in the interest of good relations between Burman and Indian labour some sort of check should be exercised over the immigration of Indian labour to Burma?—I am not at all certain whether that check which may look good may not be harmful occasionally.

M-1056. You are not prepared to give any decided opinion on that point?—When I said that I had in mind a case of this nature: Supposing you have a bad agricultural season this year you will have a large stream of unemployed labour from the agricultural side, and consequently for the next

year you may cut down the number of emigrants from India. But supposing you have a good harvest next year the Burman labour would again flow into the agricultural channel with the result that you would be short of labour for your industries.

M-1057. *Mr. Cliff*: That will raise the economic position of the worker?—It may to a certain extent, but it may act contrary also where an industry finds that it is very shorthanded.

M-1058. *Mr. Birla*: Am I to understand that for a long time to come Burma will have to depend on a regular supply of labour from India and therefore in the interests of both countries no check should be imposed on free emigration from India to Burma?—As you know, we have suggested the appointment of a Labour Commissioner from India, and in our opinion the question is so difficult to deal with that it will be worth his while to consider these points very carefully for 2 or 3 years and then decide whether a check is necessary and if so what sort of check should it be.

M-1059. You have an open mind on the question?—Yes.

M-1060. Do you think it would be a good suggestion if the tax which at present is levied on passengers leaving Burma for India and other countries was abolished and instead of that some tax was imposed by the Government of India, not by the Government of Burma, on workers leaving India for Burma with a view to exercise a healthy check by not unnecessarily encouraging Indians to come to Burma and cause unemployment among their own countrymen?—I do not think India could put a check of that nature so long as Burma was a province of India, but if Burma were separated from India then it would be a different problem altogether.

M-1061. What you mean to say is that politically it would be a bad precedent to impose taxes on workers migrating from one province to another but if Burma was separated it would be a different matter altogether?—Quite so.

M-1062. In view of what you said in reply to Sir Victor Sassoon that except in monsoon most of the workers sleep outside their houses are we to take it that overcrowding is not so much as it is thought to be?—The overcrowding may not be so much in the rooms but surely it is not a good thing for the workers to sleep on the streets with all the filth lying round.

M-1063. Being a Rangoon man yourself do you say that it is a common sight to see people sleeping on roads in Rangoon during the months in which there are no rains?—It is a common sight.

M-1064. Do they sleep on cots?—No; they sleep on stone slabs.

M-1065. Would you say that even the women sleep outside?—I think the women generally sleep inside.

M-1066. Most of the streets are very narrow and therefore the area of the road cannot be bigger than the area of the houses situated on its two sides?—I shall explain that in a general way. They sleep not in the streets so much as in the bigger roads. For instance, if there is overcrowding in Brooking street they will sleep on the Brooking street side. In these streets there are certain narrow passages over gutters where they sleep. They go to bigger streets where there is enough room.

M-1067. So they do not sleep in the same street in which they have their rooms?—Sometimes not.

M-1068. In your opinion it does not give much relief whether they sleep outside or inside?—They have some air to breathe outside.

M-1069. You suggest two sets of recommendations, one for recruited labour and the other for labour engaged locally, and I find that in the case of the former your suggestions are not as stringent as those in the case of the latter. For instance, with regard to labour engaged locally you suggest that the *maistry* should not be allowed to make payments in the way in which he is doing now but in the case of recruited labour you do not want to suggest any change?—It is not that we do not wish to change it, but the difficulty is how to change it. It is the method.

M-1070. But you say subsequently “ We do not think the *maistry* system could altogether be done away with ”. That means you do not want to change the system?—We have gone into the matter so far as we could, and we could not see any alternative to the present system.

M-1071. Would you like to impose on the *maistries* associated with recruited labour the same restrictions which you have recommended in (2), (3) and (4) in the case of *maistries* engaging local labour?—That is not possible. For instance in (2) we have recommended for labour engaged locally that the *maistry* shall receive an agreed remuneration either per head of labourer employed or on percentage of work done. The *maistry* employs the man locally, and there is no question of a loan to or its recovery from the employee. In the case of recruited labour, the *maistry* as a rule has given some money to the employee.

M-1072. Do you approve of that sort of system?—We do not, and that is why for the purpose of reducing the loan system we have proposed Nos. (3), (4) and (5) for recruited labour. We do not anticipate that we could do away with recruited labour all at once.

M-1073. Indirectly you are giving your blessing to a system which is very much condemned?—We would very much like not to give any blessing to that system. We would like to see the system abolished, but it can be done only slowly.

M-1074. *Sir Alexander Murray*: Out of 425,000 only about 25,000 are recruited in India. Surely, it is a simple matter to abolish the system?—If it is possible.

M-1075. Why can it not be abolished?—It cannot be done all at once, though we would be very glad if it were abolished.

M-1076. *Mr. Birla*: Would you recommend that all the suggestions which you have made regarding locally recruited labour should be applied also to recruited labour?—With regard to recruited labour, some of these conditions cannot be applied, because of the connection between the *maistry* and the labourer.

M-1077. Why should you be so anxious about the connection between the *maistry* and the labourer?—If it can be arranged that the *maistry* will get only his agreed remuneration and that the work will be paid direct by the employer

surely you would not care what happens to the *maistry*?—We are in this position, that we have taken a moderate view of it and have suggested certain ways by which we think the evils of the recruited system may be reduced. Instead of suggesting some drastic step for absolutely cutting it out, we have suggested certain ways which we think would reduce it gradually, ultimately leading to its abolition. If that is the view that you take, and if recruited labour does come to Burma, then some of our suggestions regarding labour engaged locally could not be applied to it. If recruited labour was done away with, then the restrictions for labour engaged locally could be applied to all labour.

M-1078. You think that so long as recruited labour comes through *maistries*, the restrictions suggested for locally engaged labour would not apply?—Yes, some of them.

M-1079. *Mr. Clow* : You estimate that out of the 350,000 that come across, very few are recruited in India?—We say it is somewhere about 20,000.

M-1080. How do you suppose the remaining 3 lakhs find their way across? Who pays for their passage?—Some of it is paid by their own people, or by men who may have collected some money; others take a loan.

M-1081. You think it probable that a good deal of that labour is assisted by their own people?—Yes.

M-1082. Or by men who act as *maistries* here?—No.

M-1083. I understand from the current report of the Chief Inspector of Factories that there is a tendency to move away from the larger rice mills which are subject to the Factories Act and to build smaller factories which, owing to the fewer people they employ, would not be subject to regulation. Have you considered the question of the regulation of such smaller factories?—There are quite a large number of these small mills springing up, and I would be in favour of regulating them.

M-1084. You do not express any definite opinion either in favour of or against sickness insurance?—We have not studied it.

M-1085. The payment of wages in Burma generally is once a month?—Yes.

M-1086. There is no demand for fortnightly or weekly payment?—I am informed that some *maistries* do pay weekly or fortnightly.

M-1087. Would you be in favour of an attempt by legislation or otherwise to secure payment on a shorter basis, on the basis of a fortnight for example, as it would be advantageous to labour?—It would no doubt be advantageous to labour, but in many instances labour cannot be paid even once a month, although the general rule is to pay once a month. If you reduce it still further, I do not know what will happen.

M-1088. You mean there are long delays?—Yes.

M-1089. Are you in favour of doing something to check it?—Yes.

M-1090. As regards the present condition of housing, your contention, I understand, is that the rules made by the Corporation are not enforced?—That is so.

M-1091. Would you be in favour of a very rigid enforcement of them now ?—No.

M-1092. Do you not think, if that is done, it would lead to a fairly straight solution of the problem, either by driving them back to India or in some other way ?—I do not know where they would go to.

M-1093. To India of course ?—Of course they can go to India. If you want to drive them back to India, that certainly could be done.

M-1094. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Would it drive them back to India ?—It may. That is one of the ways. I have never visualized such a position that the Corporation would push the men out. It would not be a reasonable position.

M-1095. *Mr. Clow* : Do you not think it is possible to work up to such a position ?—It is possible, but I do not think it is a human position.

M-1096. Do you not think it is in some ways more humane than their present condition ?—I think it would be far more human if you told the Indian labourer not to come here.

M-1097. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Regarding the Assistant Protector of Emigrants and Immigrants, you say that his position is one of great trust and responsibility and offers many sources of temptations : what have you in view ?—He may be tempted by the *maistries* or the shipping companies. For instance, a ship comes loaded. If there is sickness on board, or perhaps a bad case, it may not be reported. I am informed that in diverse ways he can make moneys from the *maistries*.

M-1098. You are suggesting that there should be a Protector of Emigrants, and that he should do all the things which you speak of. Will there not be further opportunities of temptation to him ?—No, because we are altering the status of the person altogether.

M-1099. *Mr. Clow* : Your position is that the salary of the post should be such as to make temptation less profitable ?—Yes.

M-1100. *Sir Alexander Murray* : You say that the person getting loans should come before the Protector of Emigrants, and his seal should be affixed to prove the loan. Supposing he did not come before the Protector, what then ?—We have also suggested that the agreement may be made before an employer.

M-1101. There are thousands of labourers coming from India : many of them would probably be taking loans ?—I do not know.

M-1102. Make it a practicable proposition. We want to see if it is applicable to the circumstances ?—I cannot answer it.

M-1103. Then you say that this officer could help in the recruiting of labour if his help was desired by any employer requiring labour. Is the Emigration Officer or the Agent to the Government of India to recruit labour ?—Yes.

M-1104. If I am an employer and wanted labour, I would go to his office. Then he would have to accept responsibility for me. The cooly would look to him to get his full wages, etc. ?—Yes.

M-1105. That is not done in Ceylon or Malaya ?—That does not mean it should not be done here.

M-1106. Do you think it is possible ?—Yes. If it was considered that recruited labour was necessary and, say, Messrs. Steel Bros. wanted labour, then they could, through this agency, perhaps get it. We have only made a suggestion.

M-1107. Your next suggestion is that if a recruited labourer leaves the country without repayment of loan, the officer would help in recovering the said loan. You also say that any loans not recovered within six months shall lapse ; yet you are going to make this officer a debt collector, following the man up to India to collect debts ?—Suppose a man left before six months, it would be easy for a high official of Government to write to the authorities of the district from which the labourer came.

M-1108. Do you think that is Government's function ?—The Workmen's Compensation Act is worked in that way.

M-1109. That is for a man who has suffered injury in the course of his employment, but to make a Government officer to collect debts is a different proposition ?—We have only put in these things as matters which may be considered. If they are not worth while, the Commission may chuck them.

M-1110. In regard to methods of remedying unemployment you suggest the employment of men with local qualifications or, in the alternative, closing down the institutions for such qualifications. Do you suggest that if people do not employ the men trained in the technical schools, the technical schools should be closed ?—Yes.

M-1111. Why ?—What are they going to do ?

M-1112. *The Chairman* : You think it is training them under false pretences ?—Yes.

M-1113. *Mr. Clow* : Would you close down the Universities on the same principle ?—I would, if there was no employment for the men.

M-1114. *Sir Alexander Murray* : There is no employment for many of them now ?—I would close all the Universities ; they would be much better without the Universities.

M-1115. Why do you say that 30,000 Indian labourers die every year in Burma ?—For this reason : take the total number of immigrants for the 10 years of the census, from 1921 up till now ; take also the number of those who have gone back, and there will be a balance in favour of those who have remained. If you calculate the balance which has remained, there should be about 15 lakhs of labourers now. I think you will find this very thing mentioned in the Census Report.

M-1116. The Report of the Public Health Administration in Burma shows that in one year 19,000 died; taking the Hindus and Mahomedans together. And yet you say it is over 30,000 ?—According to their records it may be so.

M-1117. But in many places you are quoting Government records ?—I am not open to accept all their statistics. I have given you certain figures which I cannot get from anywhere else.

M-1118. There are 9 lakhs odd Indians upcountry ?—According to the last census, I think there were 7,50,000.

M-1119. *Mr. Birla* : Have you taken in your calculation men who are living in Upper Burma as well as in Lower Burma ?—Yes, the whole lot of them.

M-1120. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Regarding the shipping labour strike you say that the Conciliation Board was not appointed till the matter had assumed very grave proportions and hundreds of men had been injured. But in regard to state employees in relation to trade union movement you say “But immediately the shipping dispute between Burmese and Telugu leabourers and the stevedores arose, conciliation board was appointed”. Is there not something wrong between the two statements ?—There is nothing wrong, because the riot occurred immediately after the strike. The shipping labour strike lasted about a fortnight or 3 weeks. Then a settlement was arrived at between the stevedores and the Indian labourers. Till then no Conciliation Board had been appointed by Government.

M-1121. *The Chairman* : It was appointed on the riots, not on the disputes ?—Yes.

(The witnesses withdrew.)

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**BURMA.**  
**Seventh Meeting.**

PANEL I.  
RANGOON.

*Saturday, 1st November 1930.*

PRESENT :

The Rt. Hon'ble J. H. WHITLEY (*Chairman*).

Mr. A. G. CLOW, C.I.E., I.C.S.

Mr. KABIR-UD-DIN AHMED, Bar-at-Law.

Lt. Col A. J. H. RUSSELL, C.B.E., I.M.S. (*Medical Assessor*).

Mr. J. TAIT.

Mr. S. A. S. TYABJI.

Mr. S. LALL, I.C.S., *Joint Secretary*.

} *Assistant Commissioners.*

**Statement by DHANIALOO and KAMIYA, two godown workers, at the Dunne-  
daw Saw Mills of Messrs. Steel Bros. and Co.**

M-1122. Our native place is Coconada in Madras Presidency ; we have been working here for the last 17 years. We go to our own country once in three years.

M-1123. When we first came to Burma we came voluntarily ; nobody brought us ; we came voluntarily to find work here. The *maistry* engaged us after we came here. We have been working under the same *maistry* all the time.

M-1124. We get Rs. 30 a month each ; the *maistry* pays us ; there are no deductions, we get the whole of that.

M-1125. Every month we send Rs. 15 to our country. We have no land. When we go to our own country we do coolie work there. We have wives and children.

M-1126. We are indebted to the extent of Rs. 200 each. That is debt in our own country. The Rs. 15 we send home every month is used by our wives and families except that once in 4 months the Rs. 15 is used to pay for the debt. The rate of interests is Rs. 10 per month for every Rs. 100. The debt is increasing because we do not send enough to pay for the debt.

M-1127. The *maistry* here treats us well. We have no complaints to make about our work in Rangoon. We are able to earn more here than we could in our own country.

M-1128. Our food here costs us Rs. 12 a month while each man pays Re. 1 or Rs. 2 house rent. We will not work without drink, on which we spend Re. 2 a month. We live in the town in the *maistry's* house ; we pay the *maistry* Re. 2 or Rs. 1 for house rent.

M-1129. The Rs. 15 we send for three months is not quite sufficient for our wives and children to live on, but they do some coolie work. If we sent them more money they would still work.

M-1130. If we had enough money we should send our children to school. We have free elementary schools in our villages. One of us (Dhanialoo) has a boy 10 years old and a girl of 3 years ; the boy goes to school.

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**Statement by JAGANNATHAN, a coolie maistry.**

M-1131. If men come to me I take them to the manager and he employs them ; I supply labour here for Steel Brothers. There are 400 labourers working under me ; I am the mill *maistry*.

M-1132. The manager of the firm pays those 400 labourers. I used to stand by the side of the manager as he paid the money.

M-1133. I am getting a fixed salary of Rs. 50 a month. I do not receive any money from the coolies or the manager.

M-1134. I have never found the workmen suffering from skin disease of the hands through handling the teak.

M-1135. When there is an accident we send the injured man to hospital. There is a doctor here ; there is no hospital here but there is a dispensary. Accidents among the workers do not occur often ; they occur once in a way.

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**Statement by SURRANNA, a godown maistry.**

M-1136. 120 coolies work for me in the godown ; I engage these coolies from Rangoon ; we are not getting coolies from India. The same coolies work for us for a long time.

M-1137. I pay the coolies. My own pay is Rs. 45 a month. I pay each coolie Rs. 30, from which I deduct Re. 1 for myself from each coolie.

M-1138. I have no house in which coolies live ; I do not arrange their housing for them ; they make their own arrangements.

M-1139. The coolies return to their own country once every three years. The same coolies generally come back again and work for me.

M-1140. I do not know whether there is a pension or provident fund. Dhanialoo and Kamiya are two coolies working under me. None of my coolies receive less than Rs. 30 a month.

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**Statement by MAUNG PO HTWE, a gunner.**

M-1141. I have worked here 20 years ; when I first came here I received Rs. 15 a month ; I now get Rs. 70.

M-1142. The provident fund is for men earning over Rs. 75.

M-1143. I live with my wife and children in the mill barracks, the coolie lines ; we have divided off one room in which there is nobody but myself and my wife and children.

M-1144. I cannot save anything out of my wages. I am Rs. 450 in debt at rates of interest varying from Rs. 3 to Rs. 10 per Rs. 100 per month. I cannot say whether I should be able to earn more or less anywhere else.

M-1145. My children do not go to school ; they are small.

M-1146. The one room is quite sufficient for myself, my wife and children.

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Mr. HOWISON, General Manager, Mr. GOODSIR, Superintending Engineer and Mr. A. A. CONWAY, Acting Manager of the Dunneedaw Saw Mills of Messrs. Steel Bros. and Co.

M-1147. *The Chairman* : Mr Conway, how long have you been here ?—5 years ; the manager is away at present and I have been acting for about a week.

M-1148. How many men have you under your control here ?—800.

M-1149. Of whom 120 are under the shipping *maistry* whom we have seen?—Yes.

M-1150. The remainder are directly employed and paid ?—500 are employed in the mill and the balance are outside men coming in and working as watchmen and so on.

M-1151. But except for that 120 who are engaged and paid by the shipping *maistry*, the rest are all directly paid by you ?—Yes.

M-1152. They are not paid their wages through the *maistry* ?—No.

M-1152. They are paid individually ?—Yes.

M-1154. The wages, I gather from your book, range from Rs. 19 a month upwards ?—Yes.

M-1155. Rs. 19 is the minimum for a coolie when first engaged ?—Yes.

M-1156. Does the unskilled coolie rise from Rs. 19 ?—Yes.

M-1157. What is your system of promotion or advancement ?—When a man becomes capable of taking a better job he is put up to the next job and is paid accordingly. When the coolie becomes skilled which he does by working alongside a sawyer, he will become an assistant sawyer, and then a sawyer on one of the big benches ; he will be paid according to the bench he is working on ; he will probably go up to Rs. 40 or Rs. 45. The head gunner will probably get about Rs. 150.

M-1158. Are they usually Burmans ?—Yes.

M-1159. Of the number that you employ, how many are Indians and how many Burmans ?—We have about 500 Indians, and the balance, say 50 men more or less superintending, are Burmans.

M-1160. When you take on new men, are they engaged by yourselves in the office or are they engaged by the foremen in the department ?—Coolies would be engaged by the mill *maistry* ; Burman gunners would be employed by ourselves.

M-1161. We have been told by the mill *maistry* that he is paid fixed wages and does not receive any *baksheesh* from the workers. Does that agree with your own experience?—Yes, it does.

M-1162. You think there is no *baksheesh* going on?—I do not think there is any direct payment made by the coolie to the *maistry*. I do not know whether the *maistry* makes anything outside. He messes the coolies in the barracks; he might make something on that; I do not know.

M-1163. Do you ever have any complaints of bribery to get jobs?—No, none at all.

M-1164. In your opinion is the direct payment to the workers one of the safeguards against bribery?—Yes, it is.

M-1165. Have you considered it possible to have direct payment for these shipping coolies also?—We have tried it.

M-1166. Why did you try it and then give it up?—It was tried some time before I was here, and they found that the coolies working in the godowns would not obey the *maistry*. They are a different race; they would not obey the *maistry* unless he paid their wages to them.

M-1167. It was a matter of discipline?—Yes.

M-1168. These particular coolies in your opinion prefer working under a *maistry* of their own kind?—They certainly work more efficiently if the *maistry* belongs to their own country. I think it is a village arrangement.

M-1169. How long did you try that?—I cannot say; it was some time before I was here.

M-1170. Perhaps we could have a careful note sent to us afterwards telling us about this experiment, why it was initiated, how it was tried, for what reason it was found undesirable to continue?—Yes.

M-1171. Do you take any care to see on what terms this *maistry* deals with his coolies?—No.

M-1172. It is merely a matter of engaging a *maistry* for so much labour?—Yes.

M-1173. Everything else depends on him?—Yes.

M-1174. I suppose there is a good deal of difference between a good *maistry* and a bad one?—Yes.

M-1175. You choose your *maistry* pretty carefully?—Yes.

M-1176. We have been told that your provident fund begins at Rs. 75 a month?—Yes.

M-1177. Is it impossible to carry that lower down: is the labour too irregular?—(*Mr. Howison*) Our provident fund was designed really to cover the clerical staff; it was never intended to come down to the manual workers; I do not think the possibility of extending it to that class of labour has ever been considered.

M-1178. Is the difficulty that the manual worker changes so often?—Yes, I think that is the principal difficulty. Especially is that so in the rice

mills where the men are engaged for 6 months and then are discharged and go back to their own country ; perhaps the same men do not come back again.

M-1179. A man whose period was only 3 years and who might not come back again, would not be interested in the provident fund ?—Yes.

M-1180. Have you any regular method of dealing with any grievances of your men ?—(Mr. Conway) They come to me direct.

M-1181. Do they come frequently ?—No, very infrequently.

M-1182. Do you feel that they have free access to you as manager ?—Yes, they have ; they would come to me personally.

M-1183. Do you speak their language ?—Yes.

M-1184. And they can come to you without the intervention of the *maistry* ?—Yes.

M-1185. I think your shipping *maistry* said he did not recruit in India at all, but recruited his men here in Rangoon ?—I do not know ; I did not think so, I thought he recruited them in India ; they are all Indians.

M-1186. Does he recruit these 120 men in India or here in Rangoon ?—I do not know.

M-1187. Do you find that those who are paid directly by yourself, that is to say, the mill coolies, are insubordinate to their *maistries* ?—No.

M-1188. Assuming the *maistry* were making deductions from their pay, he would not like a direct payment system, because it would diminish his personal influence to that extent ?—Yes.

M-1189. In the mill are the Indian workers to a very large extent working under the Burmese gunners ?—Yes, they are. The Indian coolies are working under Burmans in the mill.

M-1190. You do not find any difficulty in controlling that Indian labour ?—No.

M-1191. Would you care to give us any personal opinion as between direct payment and payment through *maistries* ?—No, I would not ; I have not enough experience.

M-1192. You have told us that the ordinary mill coolie begins at Rs. 19 and can rise to Rs. 40 or Rs. 45 ; could you give us any idea of the proportions of those that remain at the minimum and those who rise ?—I think about 60 per cent. are actually on Rs. 19 ; as new ones come in, the percentage remains the same.

M-1193. What proportion of the mill coolies do you house ?—The whole lot ; we house the whole of our staff except the shipping people.

M-1194. Is that housing given to them free ?—Yes.

M-1195. Do you have first aid boxes in the saw mill ?—Yes, and we have a doctor too. He lives close by and in 10 minutes he can be called in.

M-1196. I suppose he does not devote himself to your 550 coolies alone ; he has a practice ?—Yes.

M-1197. How often does he visit the mill?—Three times a day.

M-1198. That is with regard to general health apart from accidents?—  
Yes.

M-1199. Is he on call when an accident happens?—Yes.

M-1200. Are your foremen and *maistries* trained to use the first aid appliances?—We have two Europeans in the mill and I myself am generally in the mill; we all know about it. I do not think the Burmans are trained.

M-1201. I was told that the majority of the accidents are not caused by these saws but from careless handling of timber?—That is correct; speaking very roughly, about 75 per cent. of the accidents are from falling timber, cutting their hands and limbs. (*Mr. Good'sir*) 75 per cent. of the accidents are minor; the serious accidents are very few and most of them are due to carelessness, men doing things they ought not to do.

M-1202. Has the Factory Inspector ever suggested that you should guard those saws?—That matter was gone into about 3 years ago; there is difficulty in putting up guards.

M-1203. Does the Factory Inspector visit here every year?—Two or three times a year; if he wants any alterations made he sends a notice.

(The witnesses withdrew.)

(The panel adjourned.)

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## BURMA.

## Seventh Meeting.

## PANEL II.

## RANGOON.

*Saturday, 1st November 1930.*

## PRESENT :

Sir ALEXANDER MURRAY, Kt., C.B.E. (*Presiding*).

Mr. G. D. BIRLA.

Mr. JOHN CLIFF.

U AYE MAUNG, *Assistant Commissioner*.

Mr. A. DIBDIN, *Joint Secretary*.

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**Mr. A. E. L. BAYLOR**, Manager, **Mr. F. M. HALL**, Chief Engineer, and **Mr. J. OLIPHANT**, Superintending Engineer of Messrs. Bulloch Brothers' Rice Mill, Rangoon.

M-1204. *Sir Alexander Murray*: Mr. Baylor, what is your experience in rice mills?—I have been eleven years a manager of this Mill.

M-1205. What supervising staff have you to assist you in the work?—There is one Chief Engineer and one assistant Engineer. There used to be one assistant to the manager, but he is not here now. We have our own Chitagonian staff to supervise the milling and measuring of paddy.

M-1206. On an average how many tons do you handle daily?—On an average about 300 tons a day; but it varies enormously.

M-1207. What is your latest return to the Inspector of Factories regarding the number of men, women and children employed, the hours of work, rest and so on?—In the return we submitted to the Factory Inspector last year we have stated that the average number of operatives employed daily was 550 men and 50 women, that the normal hours of work per week were 60 for men and women, that each labourer was given 2 hours off per day and that we substituted other days for Sundays only under very exceptional circumstances.

M-1208. When is your busy season and when is your slack season?—The busy season is from January to May; the normal season is from June to October and the off-season is from November to December. We shut down the mill in November and December for repairs.

M-1209. What is the difference between the average number of men and women employed in a busy season and in a slack season?—I shall give you some figures for the months of January and April. In January last year when the mill was working 10 to 11 hours a day we had 174 men of all kinds on our pay roll and 625 contractor's men, which made a total of 799 men. Our production then was 8,000 tons. In the month of April when the Mill

was running continuously for  $5\frac{1}{2}$  days a week from 5 or 6 o'clock on Monday morning till mid-day on Saturday, we had 256 men on our own pay-roll and 1,080 contractor's men, making a total of 1,336 men. Our production then was 15,750 tons of rice.

M-1210. Could we have the total number of hours for which the Mill was working in January and April?—I shall send you the figures.

M-1211. How many women do you employ?—The only women we directly employ are four parting girls; but the contractor may have about 50 women chiefly engaged in unloading paddy from the boats into the godowns. They are not allowed inside the mills.

M-1212. In your report to the Factory Inspector how did you arrive at an average of 600 workers when you had 799 men in January and 1,080 men in April?—We have no control over the contractor's figures; he may not always employ the same number of men he shows in his books.

M-1213. How do you arrange to let the men 2 hours off every day?—The work is going on all the time; the *maistry* always has some surplus men and they take the interval by turns.

M-1214. Do you transfer your own staff from one mill to another mill?—In the off season we transfer half the staff to another mill of ours and keep half the staff here. If one of the mills happens to be working a complete staff is found.

M-1215. *Mr. Birla*: Have you got any register or record to show to the Factory Inspector that the men have the 2 hours off?—No, there is no register showing when a particular gang of men takes their interval.

M-1216. As regards night work, is there any arrangement by which you can say that the same men who work by day do not work by night also?—We could say that as regards our own men, but we have no control over the contractor's men. It is possible that the same men work day and night.

M-1217. What are your normal working hours?—We usually start at six in the morning and finish at five in the evening. Sometimes we start at five in the morning, but not before.

M-1218. When you have a rush of work do you keep the machines running for 13 or 14 hours a day?—Yes, we do it occasionally. On such occasions we inform the Factory Inspector.

M-1219. During such seasons would you be running your machine for 78 or 80 hours a week?—We could not say; it all depends on the quantity of work on hand. The normal hours of work are 66 per week. For instance, these are the number of hours during which the machinery was running in one week in September: Monday, 12 hours; Tuesday, 12 hours; Wednesday,  $11\frac{1}{2}$  hours; Thursday, 9 hours; Friday, 11 hours and Saturday,  $5\frac{1}{2}$  hours, making a total of 61 hours.

M-1220. How can you show that you do not exceed 60 hours a week in the case of workers in the busy season?—We can show that with regard to our own staff, but we have nothing to show with regard to the contractor's men. It is quite possible that they work more than 60 hours a week.

M-1221. *Mr. Cliff*: Have you got sufficient lighting arrangements to facilitate loading and unloading of paddy at nights?—Yes.

M-1222. Could you give us figures regarding the actual earnings of your own men and the contractor's men over a period of 12 months?—We can give figures regarding our own men, but we have no idea as to the actual number of men employed by the contractor. We can only give the total amounts paid to the contractors during the several months of the year. The Contractors do not always employ as many men as they show on their books. We only pay the contractors at so many rupees per hundred bags handled.

M-1223. Does the contract rate vary from month to month?—No, the contract is made for one full year. The rate for this year is also the same as for last year.

M-1224. Do you house your own men?—Yes. At the rate of 30 sq. ft. per individual we have accommodation for 1,676 men. But the Corporation Rules require only 24 sq. ft. for each man and at that rate we can house 2,451 men.

M-1225. Does the contractor house his own men?—We have ample accommodation for the contractor's labour but the contractor houses some of his labour in the town.

M-1226. Does the contractor recruit his coolies in India?—Yes, he does. Practically all the men are going backward and forward every year. At the end of the year the contractor sends his clerk or some *maistry* with some money to advance to the coolies and bring them back.

M-1227. Do you supply water and arrange for the conservancy of the workers' quarters?—Yes, we have a supply of a million gallons of water a month. We have had no complaints about the scarcity of water. We have got our own conservancy staff.

(The witnesses withdrew.)

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**Statement by M. A. KRISHNAN, Contractor's clerk, Messrs. Bulloch Brothers' ricemill.**

M-1228. I come from Tanjore, Madras Presidency; I came in 1913 as the contractor's clerk; I am more or less a general assistant to the contractor.

M-1229. During the 16 years since I first came here I have been to India three times and altogether I have stayed in India about a year.

M-1230. When I first came to Burma I brought my family with me, but now my family is in India.

M-1231. I come to the mill every morning and attend to the work taken up by the contractor; I keep an account of the number of coolies working, the number of bags handled, and so on.

M-1232. I work under Nagalinga Thevar who is my master; he pays me Rs. 50 a month. I have been getting Rs. 50 a month for the last 15 years. I get nothing in addition either from the mill, the coolies or the sub-*maistries*.

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M-1233. We recruit some coolies ourselves by sending agents to India and the sub-*maistries* recruit their own coolies.

M-1234. I live in the lines. I have to spend about Rs. 20 to Rs. 30 for my food and clothing. I send home about Rs. 10 to Rs. 20 every month.

M-1235. I am not in debt. I have not saved anything except what I send home to my family. I have some lands and cattle at home.

M-1236. We pay our coolies ourselves directly. In the case of sub-*maistries'* coolies we pay the sub-*maistries*. The contractor himself comes here and pays the wages. I have not got the wages book here; it is with the contractor; his house is far away.

M-1237. Sometimes I collect the debts due from the coolies and sometimes the *maistry* does it for me. We do not charge any interest.

**Statement by APPALASWAMI, a coolie at Messrs. Bulloch Brothers' ricemill.**

M-1238. I come from Vizagapatam. I came here as a boy with my father and mother. I stayed here for 10 years and then went home; I came back only two years ago. I was married four years ago; my wife is now living in India.

M-1239. In the busy season here I can earn about Rs. 10 or 12 a week, but in the off-season I earn only Rs. 5 or 6 a week.

M-1240. At present there are many coolies out of work here and we cannot earn much.

M-1241. If I have enough money I send money home; otherwise I spend it all here. I sent nothing home last month because I did not get enough work. On an average I send home about Rs. 100 every year.

M-1242. I came here of my own accord; I paid my own passage which cost me Rs. 20. I have been working in this mill for the last two years; before that I was a rickshaw puller; I left that job because I did not earn enough money. I was getting Rs. 2, 3 or 4 a day as a rickshaw puller, but later on, owing to the increase in the number of rickshaws, I could not get even Re. 1 a day.

M-1243. I live in the Alimulla godowns and pay a rent of Re. 1 a month. I stayed there when I was a rickshaw puller. I live with my uncle; I give him whatever I earn; he gives me food and sends home whatever remains.

M-1244. I come to the mill at 5 A.M. before taking my breakfast. If there is work in the mill I go on doing it. I go home for half an hour at 12 o'clock. In the evening I usually leave the mill at 5 o'clock, but if there is plenty of work I stay till 8 or 9<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> at night; I cannot stay longer because I get tired.

M-1245. I earn Rs. 2 to 3 a day when the mill is busy, but when there is no work I sit idle.

M-1246. At present a number of us are out of work.

M-1247. Last year I sent home about Rs. 100. I spend about Rs. 12 or 13 every month here. I work in a gang of 70 men. The *maistry* comes here to the mill every Sunday and pays the wages. I am quite contented here; I am quite comfortable in my house. I am going to send for my wife.

**Mr. A. J. ESSACK, Manager, Adamjee Match Factory, Rangoon.**

M-1248. *Sir Alexander Murray*: Could we see your last report to the Inspector of Factories?—Yes, here is the report.

M-1249. It says that during 1929 the average number of operatives employed was:—

Men	..	..	..	..	..	1,051
Women	..	..	..	..	..	405
Boys	..	..	..	..	..	53
Girls	..	..	..	..	..	45,

making a total of 1,554. The Mill was working two shifts during that period. The normal hours of work for that period were 60 for men and women and 36 for boys and girls. The working hours were from 6-30 to 11-30 and 1 to 6. Do you work a night shift also?—Some departments work a night shift also. The night shift hours are from 6-30 to 11-30 P.M. and 1 to 6 A.M.

M-1250. What was your average daily attendance last month?—The average daily attendance was as follows:—

October	27th	..	..	..	..	903
..	28th	..	..	..	..	889
..	29th	..	..	..	..	894
..	30th	..	..	..	..	892

M-1251. Could you let us have the total number of men, women and children employed during the day and night shifts for two or three months last year?—We shall send you the figures. We do not employ women and children during night shifts.

(The witness withdrew.)

(The Panel adjourned.)

**BURMA.****Eighth Meeting.****RANGOON.***Monday, 3rd November 1930.***PRESENT :**The Rt. Hon'ble J. H. WHITLEY (*Chairman*).

Sir VICTOR SASSOON, Bart.

Sir ALEXANDER MURRAY, Kt., C.B.E.

Mr. A. G. CLOW, C.I.E., I.C.S.

Mr. KABIR-UD-DIN AHMED, Bar-at-Law.

Mr. G. D. BIRLA.

Mr. JOHN CLIFF.

Lt.-Col. A. J. H. RUSSELL, C.B.E.,  
I.M.S. (*Medical Assessor*).

Mr. J. TAIT.

U AYE MAUNG.

Mr. S. A. S. TYABJI.

U HLA BU.

} *Assistant Commissioners.*Mrs. TE TE LUCE (*Lady Assessor*).

Mr. S. LALL, I.C.S.

Mr. A. DIBDIN.

} *Joint Secretaries.***Mr. W. H. C. PRIDEAUX, A.M.I.E.E., Chief Inspector of Factories,  
Burma.**

M-1252. *The Chairman* : What is the amount of help that you get from officers other than factory inspectors who have duties or powers under the Factories Act ?—We do not get very much help.

M-1253. Will you tell me who, besides your official staff, have powers and duties ?—The district magistrates are in all cases *ex-officio* inspectors. In certain cases the sub-divisional officers have been appointed inspectors for certain local areas. The Director of Public Health and his staff are inspectors of factories for sanitary purposes. On the oil-fields the Wardens are the inspectors of factories.

M-1254. That completes the list ?—Yes.

M-1255. All those persons have other duties which very largely occupy their time and thought ?—That is so.

M-1256. So that the amount of help they are able to give in securing compliance with the Factories Act is small ?—Comparatively small.\*

M-1257. Have you any suggestion to make to the Commission on that point ?—No, not on a leading question like that.

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\*In 1929 the *ex-officio* and additional inspectors paid 24 visits to factories.

M-1258. Do those—shall we call them *ex-officio* factory inspectors—report to you direct?—Yes.

M-1259. Do you issue to them any circular for guidance?—The Local Government have issued a circular a copy of which you will find at the end (page 89) of the Burma Factories Manual.

M-1260. That circular is giving them guidance as to the kind of help they can render?—Yes. It is under revision, I may say, just at the present moment.

M-1261. You do not suggest to us any change in that?—The ordinary procedure is this: when the inspectors of factories go round to the factories after their visits they send a letter to each factory pointing out the irregularities, and a copy of each letter goes to the district magistrate concerned. The district magistrates confine their inspections, when they make any, more or less to seeing how far these irregularities have been remedied. In some cases the district magistrates do not go themselves. They send the letter on to the sub-divisional officer, the sub-divisional officer sends it on to the township officer and the township officer sends it on to the Thugyi who is the village headman. I should prefer that the village headmen and township officers were not allowed to inspect factories at all.

M-1262. The second thing in which you are under the same disabilities as your colleagues in other parts of India is that penalties imposed for breaches of the Factories Act are, speaking generally, too low?—Yes.

M-1263. They may not be adequate to result in full compliance with the law?—No.

M-1264. Does the same difficulty apply to a second offence also, namely, that there is no increased penalty?—Sometimes we get a very heavy penalty inflicted. We do take into consideration previous offences here.

M-1265. You do not suggest that the law might require the second or subsequent offences should have a minimum penalty attached to them?—I should welcome it from my point of view, but it is unusual, I think, in this country to have a minimum penalty.

M-1266. That is quite true. There are obvious objections, but there are also arguments on the other side in favour of it. Will you tell us whether the factory inspector is entitled between convictions and sentences to bring up the record of previous convictions?—Yes.

M-1267. Do you find any difficulty in that respect; do you tell the magistrates?—As a matter of fact, the way in which a prosecution is generally conducted in this country is to bring the evidence first, and the magistrate before saying whether he is going to convict or not reserves judgment till a week or a fortnight later. By that time we have left that particular place. If we wish to bring up the record of any previous conviction we do it—I do not know whether it is regular or not—before the magistrate announces that he is going to convict or not.

M-1268. You have not found any objection taken to that course?—It has not been objected to, but I do not know, the law on the subject. In connection with prosecutions may I say that an enormous amount of

time is wasted. I think either this year or last year I had to go to Toungoo four times in connection with one prosecution. I am very strongly of the opinion that a great deal of time would be saved if inspectors were allowed to compound offences as forest officers can under the Forest Act. I do not know whether you are acquainted with the practice of compounding offences in this country. The system is that if an irregularity is found the officer says "Well, you have got to pay Rs. 50 or 100 as the case may be into the treasury or you will be prosecuted". If he pays the money into the treasury and notifies the officer nothing further is heard of the matter, but if he does not pay he is prosecuted.

M-1269. On the matter of small factories, from the evidence submitted to us, it would appear that the present limit of 20 has a tendency in Burma to encourage the establishment of certain small factories coming just under the number which compete no doubt with the larger factories. What is your experience in that direction?—It is perfectly true that there are a very large number of small factories in Burma, but I do not think they have grown up in order to avoid coming under the Factories Act. I think it is a pure coincidence. These small German mills have been found to be very economical and they can work with a small staff.

M-1270. You have not heard from factories of unfair competition in the matter of rest or holidays?—Yes, I have, but not very often I admit.

M-1271. Do you not yourself lay much stress on that?—If we had a larger staff we could keep a stricter eye on the bigger factories keeping to the hours of work, and then I think they might possibly object to smaller factories escaping the necessity of complying with the factory regulations. I am afraid that up-country the provisions of the Act relating to the hours of work are not very strictly complied with.

M-1272. Then you do not offer any opinion yourself as to the advisability of bringing the number down from 20 to 10?—Yes, I am in favour of it provided only we have an adequate staff. I am very strongly indeed against any extension of the Factories Act unless we have an extension of the staff at the same time.

M-1273. May I take it that to cover your existing field you ought to have double the staff?—Something like that.

M-1274. And in order to cover the increased field you would require to double it again?—Not quite as bad as that. I think we have sent a special report to you on the subject.

M-1275. You just now mentioned that even in those factories which are under the Factories Act there is no strict compliance with the weekly rest day and the holidays?—It is very badly observed. We have a lot of prosecutions for that.

M-1276. What is the chief point on which you have evasion?—Failure to shut on a Sunday or a substituted day.

M-1277. That is to work 7 days a week?—Not only that. Some of the mills work continuously practically all through the milling season.

M-1278. With regard to changes in the nominal weekly holiday there is a difficulty you have heard of elsewhere that the notice required to be given to you is inadequate?—I do not attach very much importance to the notice to the inspector, but I attach importance to the notice to be put up in the mill.

M-1279. In your view how long—2 days or 3 days—before a change of the weekly holiday should a notice be put up ?—Provided it is put up before the Sunday or the substituted day I think it is sufficient.

M-1280. It seems pretty clear from the small staff at your disposal that it is impossible for you or your colleagues to attend to all enquiries into serious accidents ?—We investigate fatal accidents at once ; the other accidents have to wait their turn.

M-1281. You are not able to attend the first inquiry into these accidents ?—No.

M-1282. You refer to the absence of healthy trade unions ?—There is only one trade union in this place, and that is in connection with motor car drivers. But we get some help from the Burma Labour Association which is somewhat of a similar body.

M-1283. Can you give me a rough idea of what amount of outside help you receive, the number of letters and petitions ?—It is very small ; not more than 3 or 4 letters a year.

M-1284. *Mr. Clow* : You mentioned to the Chairman that certain inspections of factories are made by village headmen. Is that due to the delegation of power by the district magistrate, or are the village headmen empowered under the Factories Act to inspect factories ?—It is only a delegation of power by the district magistrate.

M-1285. The headman so deputed has no power under the Act to enter a factory ?—No.

M-1286. As regards amplifying the staff, would it be possible at all in the case of seasonal factories to make use of the boiler inspection staff for a certain part of the year ?—I think it would be possible provided the boiler inspection staff is transferred to the factory department. You cannot make them attend to two things at one and the same time. That has been tried and proved a failure.

M-1287. You will agree that there is a big difference normally between inspection of a perennial factory of the average type and inspection of a seasonal factory in that the machinery is more complicated in the one than in the other ?—What exactly do you mean by a seasonal factory ?

M-1288. A cotton ginning factory or a rice mill ?—I look upon a cotton ginning factory as containing more dangerous machinery than a rice mill.

M-1289. Roughly speaking, out of your 950 factories you have 668 seasonal and 282 perennial ?—Yes.

M-1290. With about 41,000 people employed in seasonal factories and about 54,000 in perennial ?—That is so.

M-1291. What is the season in the case of the rice mills ?—The rice mills begin very early in the year, in January, and work hard until about May. After that they work intermittently until the end of the year. From the middle of November till the end of the year there is very little work done.

M-1292. What would be the average number of weeks the majority would work in a year ?—I do not think that the average figure would be a fair figure because it varies so much.

M-1293. Would it be true to say that the majority do not work more than 4 months ?—Yes, but they do not shut down and stop working absolutely ; they are always liable to reopen again. The smaller rice mills to a very large extent do what is known as milling-hire paddy. A rice broker who has some paddy stored comes along to the miller and says ' I want you to mill so many baskets of paddy for me ', and that may be at any time of the year.

M-1294. What exemptions do you give in favour of the rice mills ?—So long as the inspector is satisfied that the workmen get 2 hours off during their 12 hours work they are not obliged to give a fixed rest interval.

M-1295. They are not exempted from section 27 ?—Yes. They may work overtime, 30 days in a calendar year, but not more than 3 hours on one day. They have to notify the Chief Inspector on each occasion and they have to keep a record of the persons working overtime. Overtime has to be paid at least  $1\frac{1}{2}$  times the ordinary rate, and no person should be employed after 10 o'clock at night or before 6 o'clock in the morning.

M-1296. Are they exempted from the provision which requires a weekly rest day ?—No, they have got to give that.

M-1297. You referred to the inadequacy of fines. I think the High Court issued a circular some time ago on the subject ?—Yes, they did.

M-1298. Did that produce any noticeable effect ?—I think it produced an improvement. I also refer to the circular in my letter of complaint.

M-1299. Wages are paid almost universally by the month, are they ?—Almost universally by the month. In the cotton ginning mills up-country they are paid daily to some extent ; that is, the wages for the day are paid the following morning.

M-1300. Are wages paid promptly as a rule ?—I believe so, but I came across a case where wages had not been paid for  $4\frac{1}{2}$  months.

M-1301. Was there not a strike ?—No.

M-1302. Why was that ?—The mill hands are in the hands of the employers in some way and they seem to be afraid of them to some extent.

M-1303. Are you in favour of a provision which would make the payment of wages within a reasonable period compulsory ?—I am very much in favour of it.

M-1304. How would you enforce that ? When men are not willing even to strike after they have not been paid for  $4\frac{1}{2}$  months are they likely to complain to an official ?—The employers will have to keep an attendance register showing the total amount of wages due and the dates when they are paid with the thumb impressions of the workers. If such a register is not produced and the inspector finds that wages have not been paid properly it should be made an offence under the Act.

M-1305. In a good many mills wages are not paid to the men direct but are paid to the *maistries* ?—That does make a difficulty.

M-1306. How would you surmount that ?—I should like to see it made a rule that wages have to be paid direct into the hands of workmen.

M-1307. *The Chairman* : You think that is practicable in all cases ?— I believe it would be practicable, but of course there would be an awful amount of opposition to it.

M-1308. *Mr. Clow* : Will it be practicable in the case of an employer who has a contract for a fixed sum and the question of the amount of wages is left to the determination of the contractor ?—There will be difficulty in that case.

M-1309. *The Chairman* : It would necessitate a new form of contract. But the point is that you think it would be a great advance if each workman received his pay into his own hands from the employer ?—Yes.

M-1310. *Mr. Clow* : How do you calculate the average attendance for the purpose of the annual returns ?—We accept the figures of the manager.

M-1311. Suppose a factory works 6 days a week and the attendance is, say 70, on each day throughout the year, is the average daily attendance for that factory 60 or 70 ?—I should take it as 70 certainly ; but as a matter of fact we accept the manager's figures, and we do not question him as to how he worked them out.

M-1312. Do you not give any instructions ?—We supply each factory with a form and we send a letter with it. Beyond saying that the figure to be supplied should be the average number of employees employed during the busy season we do not give any further instructions.

M-1313. If a mill works with its full strength for a few months of the year and with a lesser number for the rest of the period the average given would represent its peak employment ?—Yes.

M-1314. But if a mill works 4 months of the year and closes for 8 months it would be the average for those 4 months and not the average for the year ?—It would be the average for the 4 months.

M-1315. *Mr. Cliff* : Has the manager of the mill to accept the labour contractor's figures as to the number of men employed while preparing the return you referred to just now ?—I think so.

M-1316. There is no register at all of employees ?—Not in all cases. They keep a register in cases where the hours of work for all the workers are not fixed, but if everybody works the same hours they are not obliged to keep a register.

M-1317. *The Chairman* : Would you be in favour of a much more complete kind of register being kept by all employers ?—I should be in favour of a muster roll showing the names of the people, the hours they work, the rate of pay, the total amount for the month and the date of payment.

M-1318. Do you agree that the law should be empowered to require a form of muster roll which would be established after consultation with the employers in each industry and subject to the approval of the Factory Inspector ?—I should give Government power to prescribe a form, but with the sanction of the Factory Inspector other forms might be substituted.

M-1319. *Mr. Cliff* : Should that apply to contractors' labourers as well as to employers' labourers ?—It would be a very difficult question with regard to contract labour. You may have men coming on for a couple

of days only, and it would be a very difficult job to get their names down. I am inclined to think that in such cases it would be sufficient if the number is taken.

M-1320. *Mr. Tait* : Would you still favour the casual labourers being paid direct or through the contractor ?—I do not see why they should not be paid direct.

M-1321. Is it a practicable proposition ?—As they went out of the mill compound, they should be paid their wages of 8 or 12 annas, or whatever it might be.

M-1322. They may be leaving in the middle of the night ?—Surely, you can have a cashier or somebody to pay them at that time.

M-1323. Have you ever actually studied that aspect of the business in the rice mills ?—I realize the difficulty experienced in the case of men going from mill to mill.

M-1324. *Mr. Cliff* : In one of the mills we visited the other morning, we found that only a minority of the labour was directly employed by the mill. If the register is to be of value, should it not apply to the whole or to the great majority of the labour employed ?—Really it would be impossible to do it. If you get 500 men coming on, it would take so long to get their names down. Besides, I do not see that it is really of any very particular interest what the names of the labourers are.

M-1325. What about the numbers ?—I think it would be reasonable to show the number of people employed on contract each day.

M-1326. With the rates of pay ?—It is very difficult to know that, because it is a sort of piece-work business. They are paid for 100 baskets for shifting paddy, and they would share the money equally after allowing for various deductions by the contractor for his profit.

M-1327. From a statement in the memorandum submitted by the Government, I gather that you prefer that wages should be paid monthly ?—Yes.

M-1328. And paid within a specified period ?—Yes. I am now of course referring to permanent labour.

M-1329. We were in a factory the other morning, where the minority of the labour directly employed was paid monthly, but the casual labour was paid weekly ?—I should think if it was paid weekly, it was rather permanent casual labour.

M-1330. Do you see any reasonable objection to the weekly payment of wages ?—I think, on the whole, weekly payment of wages would not be of advantage to the labourers of this country. It must be remembered that in Burma nearly all the labour is imported. The great majority of these people leave their families in their homes in India. They send money home every month. I have not seen any very reliable figures, but I believe it is somewhere about Rs. 5 to Rs. 6 per month. If they are paid monthly, they remit this amount monthly. If they are paid weekly, they might have a balance of Re. 1 a week ; they may not think it worth while to send home such a small sum, and may spend it on liquor.

M-1331. But there is a considerable portion of this immigrant labour paid weekly ?—I do not think there is a very great deal of it in the mills. What happens outside the mills I cannot say.

M-1332. In the rice mills where they are carrying paddy from the booth to the godown or to the mill and where they are carrying rice from the godown to the rail, is all that area under the Factories Act?—Yes, I think so.

M-1333. Is there any doubt about it?—I should say not.

M-1334. Do you see any practical difficulty in rules being framed under the Factories Act to be applicable to docks?—I do not think you could do it. Whatever the opinion of the legal advisers of Government may be, I do not think it would be at all proper to do it. I am perfectly convinced in my own mind that when the Act was passed by the Legislative Assembly, it was never intended to apply to docks, and even if it could be dragged on to apply to docks by the actual wording used, I think it would be an improper procedure. If the legislature wants it to apply to docks, it should say so.

M-1335. *The Chairman* : If the legislature brought the docks under the Factories Act, would there be any objection?—None whatever.

M-1336. *Mr. Cliff* : You would be in favour of it?—It would be quite a good plan to do it, more particularly as the Geneva Conference are taking such an interest in the matter at present.

M-1337. Have you any powers at all in the oilfields?—There happen to be a few workshops there which come under the Factories Act, but on the oil wells we have no power.

M-1338. Does that present any difficulties in administration?—Yes, it does. In a few cases their workshops are worked by steam. Half the steam from the boiler is used for the workshop and half for the oil well. When I was up there some little time ago, it appeared that the hours of work for boiler attendants looking after boilers used for driving the machinery on the oil wells were longer than allowed by the Factories Act, and it was rather difficult to apply the Factories Act strictly to the men who were looking after the boilers for driving the workshops.

M-1339. Do the oil refineries come under the Factories Act, or under the Petroleum Act?—They come under the Factories Act, but of course they come under the Petroleum Act.

M-1340. Do you have full powers under the Factories Act for the whole year in the refineries?—Yes.

M-1341. You do not express any opinion with regard to the reduction of hours but if there is to be a reduction, would you prefer that it should be a weekly half-holiday?—Yes.

M-1342. Is there any special reason for it?—I do not see that a reduction of hours would do very much good to anybody, but if there was a half-holiday on Saturdays, they would be able to get away for some recreation, which would do them more good than having half an hour off on the ordinary work days. That is purely my personal opinion.

M-1343. Are you in favour of wages being paid on a regular working day and not on rest day?—Yes, immediately after working hours. There is no reason why the men should be brought back to the factory afterwards for payment.

M-1344. *Col. Russell* : Is there any industrial disease in the factories in Burma except the lead poisoning at Namtu that you mention ?—I have come across cases of dermatitis in the oil factories.

M-1345. Are they frequent ?—I should not say they were frequent.

M-1346. Or serious ?—No. I do not believe any cases have gone to cancer.

M-1347. What steps have been taken to reduce the incidence of lead poisoning ?—Lead poisoning has been lessened by the provision of the flume up the hill that you probably saw in Namtu. That was put up by the Company on their own initiative, without any outside advice,

M-1348. *Mr. Clow* : Does the Act give you adequate power to prevent lead poisoning ?—It does not.

M-1349. Would you recommend that you should be given such power ?—I should recommend a provision in the Indian Act rather similar to the section in the English Act, giving power to make regulations.

M-1350. Would the application of the present Schedule cover the problem ?—The English regulations cover 3 or 4 pages of close print, and they have been found suitable for England. I should like something rather more definite than the Schedule in the Indian Act.

M-1351. *Col. Russell* : Have you yourself made any suggestions to the management of the Burma Corporation as to the prevention of lead poisoning ?—Yes, I have made one or two suggestions.

M-1352. Have they been carried out ?—I believe they have been.

M-1353. Do you attribute the fall in the incidence of lead poisoning cases to the building of the flume and the carrying out of the other suggestions that you have made ?—There certainly has been a fall since the flume was built. I would point out that I have not got any reliable figures regarding lead poisoning in India. It is not a notifiable or reportable disease.

M-1354. So that the statistics we have been provided with are not in any way reliable in your opinion ?—I have not seen any reliable statistics, but I do not quite know what you have been given.

M-1355. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : Is there any reason why they should not be reliable, even if lead poisoning is not a notifiable disease ?—I do not know how they are got. They may be reliable.

M-1356. *Col. Russell* : You mentioned that the Director of Public Health and his assistants were *ex-officio* inspectors of mines. In connection with lead poisoning would not they give you statistics ?—Lead poisoning is a special disease, and you really require a trained man there permanently to diagnose it with success.

M-1357. The medical officers of the Burma Corporation ought eventually to be able to diagnose lead poisoning ?—They might do it, but I should prefer that work to be done by somebody who is independent of the company.

M-1358. Do you think that the position is such in Namtu that you require a medical officer with special training ?—I think so, but I would rather that question was put to the Director of Public Health himself.

M-1359. The Factory Inspector's Department at home has got a Medical Department of its own. Have you anything similar to that in mind?—No. There is no justification for a Department like that here. But in addition to that at home they have certifying surgeons, and all reports of lead poisoning come before the certifying surgeons in the first place. They make a careful examination and report. The certifying surgeons there are independent practitioners, quite independent of Government, the employer and the workmen.

M-1360. Would you say that the Public Health officers had been of use to you?—Certainly.

M-1361. Should there come a time in Burma when you had district health officers, you would raise no objection to these officers being *ex-officio* inspectors of factories?—I think it would be quite a good idea.

M-1362. *Mr. Tyabji* : Would you agree that the incidence of fatal and serious accidents under the Factories Act is heavier in Burma in comparison with the other major provinces in India?—I am afraid I have not compared the figures of the other provinces.

M-1363. Would it not be better to have a comparative statement in your report?—It would clearly be impossible to have it in the Burma report, but there is no reason why it should not be given in the report issued by the Central Government.

M-1364. The figures are given in the Abstract of Statistics?—I would suggest that should be enough.

M-1365. Do you not think that that might help you?—I have looked at these figures sometimes, but I do not remember how the incidence of accidents compares.

M-1366. In the 1928 report you have a table showing the incidence of accidents together with the causes. In the 1929 report you have not got that statement. Do you not think that it is one of the most important statements?—I think it is a very useful statement, but I do not think it is necessary to have it every year. I prepared it really for my own information. As far as I could see, it was of no interest to anybody else. As it involved a great deal of labour, I did not prepare it next year.

M-1367. Now that more interest is being taken in labour problems, do you not think in future it is necessary to have such a statement?—That could be done.

M-1368. According to your report, whilst fatal accidents are numerous and in the majority of cases have occurred in the larger concerns, the prosecutions and convictions refer mostly to the smaller concerns. Could you say why that is so?—Accidents depend to a very large extent on the number of people employed, while offences under the Factories Act do not depend to the same extent on the number of people employed.

M-1369. Could you give any reason as to why, in the case of fatal accidents, there have been practically no prosecutions whatsoever?—There could be a prosecution only when a criminal offence has been committed. In going through the list for last year, there is only one case which appears, on the surface, to have been due to a breach of the Factories Act; it is No. 24 in the list. In that case, I remember there was a fencing and the man had climbed over and was killed; nobody was really to blame except the man himself. It is very much the same in the other cases.

M-1370. Would the other accidents come under "Lack of supervision" ?—Sometimes, not always. For example, here is one accident "due to being crushed between two pieces of timber". That probably was a pure accident, which could not have been avoided by any care. The next one was probably due to careless handling. You cannot really prosecute a man for the workman's clumsiness. The next one is similar to that: "Due to the fall of a stack of timber". That might possibly have been due to lack of supervision; the timber might have been stacked badly, and it might have been possible to avoid that. Then there is an accident from a fall from a bamboo scaffold. That is very difficult to avoid.

M-1371. Take for instance the collapse of a brick wall in 1927 and the lathe falling in 1928 in the Railways. Then there was the collapse of the tank in the Burmah Oil Company, and the accident regarding the cutting of a barrel in two firms in 1927 and 1928. Are they not more owing to the lack of supervision than anything else ?—Some of them probably were due to lack of supervision.

M-1372. What would you do with regard to these accidents which occur more or less through lack of supervision ?—In the majority of cases, I think it is impossible to do anything. There was what appeared to me to be a very bad case of a man being killed through a chain snapping. I was on the scene of the accident within 10 minutes and I saw the chain. It was very badly corroded and worn out; it was not a chain that ought to have been used for raising heavy weights. First of all, I prosecuted the Manager under the Indian Penal Code. He blamed the engineer and got off. The engineer was then prosecuted, and he blamed somebody else. It was found to be absolutely impossible to bring home to any individual the faults in the chain. Under the Factories Act, if an irregularity is committed, the manager may be prosecuted, and he can only get out of being convicted and fined by putting up somebody else who is convicted and fined. Under the Indian Penal Code, you have to get down to the individual who is actually responsible.

M-1373. *The Chairman* : Can you not prosecute the firm ?—I do not think you can.

M-1374. *Mr. Tyabji* : With regard to the boiler accident which happened in a rice mill a few months ago, in which two or three men were killed, what steps were taken to bring home the offence to the employer ?—That was an offence under the Boiler Act. He was prosecuted for an obvious breach of the Boiler Act and fined a ridiculous sum of Rs. 20 or Rs. 30.

M-1375. Since the provision requiring certified men being employed for boilers has been taken off, has there been an increase in boiler accidents ?—I could not tell you that. The Chief Inspector of Boilers might be called if you wish.

M-1376. With regard to inland vessels driven by power, the builders trade, the construction of bridges and such other trades, are you in favour of regulating them under the Factories Act or some other Act ?—I would be inclined to have parts of the Factories Act applied to buildings in the course of construction and such other engineering works, because at present we know so little about them. I should like to see the provision requiring necessary, the Act might be applied *in toto*.

M-1377. *Mr. Clow* : Any building ?—A building covered by the Workmen's Compensation Act. In the English Act, it is a building over 20 feet high. You might adopt the English definition if you like.

M-1378. *Mr. Ahmad* : You inspected 355 factories in 1929, out of 976. If you had an increased number of inspectors, there would have been more prosecutions and more fines ?—Yes, probably.

M-1379. Therefore, by increasing the number of inspectors Government will not be a loser ?—I am afraid no inspector pays himself.

M-1380. In our inspection of workmen's dwellings we found some of them very dirty. Who is responsible for it ?—The people living in them, for making them dirty.

M-1381. Not the employers who have provided the buildings ?—They may be responsible for cleaning them up afterwards.

M-1382. *The Chairman* : What duties have you in connection with housing ?—I am not quite sure whether coolies' lines attached to factories form part of the factories or not. I have had prosecutions in connection with them and got convictions.

M-1383. Would you be in favour of bringing them under the Factories Act ?—I should be in favour of it, but with the present public opinion, I think you must rely on the local authorities for that kind of work. It is not desirable that the Provincial Government should interfere too much with the local authorities.

M-1384. Where the responsibility lies on the municipal authorities, you would not wish to have any jurisdiction which might overlap ?—Exactly.

M-1385. *Sir Alexander Murray* : What type of inspectors do you wish to have as assistants ?—I think there is an opening for two different types. I think it is desirable to get a superior grade who should be engineers, because engineering questions will occasionally come up. I am not at all certain that it would not be better for the lower grade men to be men of the best education you can get for the money, rather than not very well educated engineers. For example, if there were two grades in Burma, I would rather have men with economics degrees in the lower grade than men with engineering degrees. I think the amount of engineering knowledge that the junior inspectors require is small, and they could be taught that in the Department. It is very desirable that all the inspectors, both the higher grade men and second grade men, should be men of some general culture which it is much more difficult to give them after they have left college than before.

M-1386. How do you make the workers in factories acquainted with the provisions of the Factories Act ; we have seen notices posted up in English and Burmese, which, of course, the Indian workers would not understand ?—If the notice were in their Indian language they could not read it, so that it does not make much difference.

M-1387. Do you issue any pamphlets ?—No. Under the Workmen's Compensation Act we have notices which we are distributing ; when a factory is registered, we send them an abstract of the Factory Act.

M-1388. When an accident takes place and is reported to you under the Factories Act, do you send it on to the Commissioner under the

Workmen's Compensation Act ?—If it appears to be an accident which would come under the Workmen's Compensation Act ; we do not send him a list of all accidents, but only selected accidents.

M-1389. What reliance can you place on the figures in your returns as to the actual number of workers employed in factories ?—Very little I am afraid. We have to rely on the people who send in returns.

M-1390. Do you ever attempt to check the figures ?—No, we never check that. If the number of persons employed in a factory is about 20 and it is questionable whether the factory comes under the Factories Act or not, we do check it, but we never worry about the other figures.

M-1391. Do you think it would be possible to pay all contractors' men daily wages ?—I believe they all get the same pay and really I do not see why the 8 annas should not be put into the hand of each man as he goes out of the factory gate at night.

M-1392. I understand you to say that when men are paid monthly they send part of their wages home, whereas they cannot be expected to do so when they are paid weekly ; what happens with regard to a man who is paid daily ?—There is no other way of dealing with a man who is taken on for the day. When you have what I will call permanent casual labour I should like them paid by the month ; but when you have the absolutely casual labour, the kind of labour that works in one mill one day, another mill the next day, and a third mill the third day, it seems to me there is no way of avoiding daily payment.

M-1393. Contractors' labour does not come on to the books of the mill ?—I should like that contract system abolished.

M-1394. How would you do it ?—I would alter the system in this way : the contractor, instead of getting a contract to shift so much paddy or do so much work, would merely get a contract to provide so much labour and that labour would be paid directly by the mill owner.

M-1395. *The Chairman* : Would the discipline be equally good in that case ?—I do not know but I think it probably would be.

M-1396. *Sir Alexander Murray* : How would you make this change ?—I admit it would be a very unpopular change. I should say you should prohibit any contract work in certain scheduled factories. I would not include all factories, because in engineering works, for instance, I do not think there is any chance of harm being done ; but I should be inclined to prohibit any unskilled contract work in a factory.

M-1397. Could you do that ?—I think so.

M-1398. *The Chairman* : If you enacted that wages must be paid direct to the worker by the employer, could not the rest of the working out of an improved system be left to the employers ?—Yes, I think so.

M-1399. *Sir Alexander Murray* : When you suggest that docks should be included in the Factories Act, would you include Prome and Mandalay ?—Any place where a power driven launch pulls up alongside the stream I think might be included for the purpose of the Act.

M-1400. How many places within the meaning of the Act will you add to your duty in Burma ?—As a matter of fact, you would not have to worry about any except the larger towns like the sea ports and Mandalay and Prome. You might include the others verbally but it

would not make any addition. In England every dock is under the Factory Act, from the smallest upwards.

M-1401. Can you tell how many hours in a year a particular mill has worked ?—They are supposed to advise us when a change is made. I do not say that that advice is sent very promptly. It can be worked out by seeing when the changes were made, except that when they shut down we have no record.

(The witness withdrew.)

**Mr. C. INNES, Deputy Chief Engineer of the Public Works Department (Roads and Buildings Branch), Government of Burma.**

M-1402. *The Chairman* : With regard to health conditions your Code lays down with some elaboration what is to be done in the case of large public works. Are those conditions actually inserted in the contracts when tenders are invited ?—No, our Department is responsible for that with regard to labour directly employed. There are no special clauses put into contracts, but naturally we have got to see that the coolies are properly housed ; if the contractor does not do it, we would have to do it and arrange to make the contractor pay for it. But I know of no case where a contractor has not made proper arrangements for his coolies, because it is to his own advantage to do so.

M-1403. You say in your memorandum that wages are paid in cash by the sub-divisional officer to the worker ; to whom ?—To the worker into his own hand in the case of our own labour ; in the case of a contractor, his work would be measured and he would be paid for the work done ; he then pays his workers.

M-1404. Where he pays his workers, are there any conditions laid down as to fair wages ?—None ; he makes his own arrangements entirely.

M-1405. Supposing for a particular job you have three contractors sending in a tender, you have no knowledge as to the rate of wages proposed to be paid by those three different men ?—None whatever.

M-1406. And it does not interest you ?—No, it does not.

M-1407. Therefore the one who pays the lowest wages might possibly undercut and get the contract ?—That is quite possible.

M-1408. You take no interest in that ?—No, we do not concern ourselves with that at all. As a rule a contractor has got to pay at least the wages we pay, and usually more, because he does not necessarily give them continuous employment. Our own departmental labour is employed throughout the month and we can get them to work for less than if they were only going to be employed for a few days in the month. As a rule the contractor only pays his labour for the days on which they work and therefore he has got to pay them more.

M-1409. Do you have many disputes between contractors and their men in which you are called in ?—No, not many.

M-1410. You have some ?—It has happened ; I cannot at the present moment remember any instance.

M-1411. Do you think it would be advantageous that all contractors should tender on the same basis as regards payment of wages and that there should be a clause embodying the prevailing rate of wages?—I have not considered it and I do not know how it would work in practice.

M-1412. You say the month's wages are paid within the first 10 days of the ensuing month; that again, I take it, applies to your own permanent labour?—Yes. I should qualify that by saying that there are certain places, for instance, on the frontier, where they have to wait longer for their wages.

M-1413. Does your information lead you to believe that the contractors pay their men as promptly as that?—I believe they have to pay them at shorter periods because the labour has not so much faith in the contractor as it has in Government; sometimes the contractor has to pay them daily.

M-1414. Those would be small jobs?—Not necessarily. I think each contractor makes his own arrangement; it depends largely on the labour; if the labour can trust the contractor, he does not require to pay them so often.

M-1415. You tell us that wherever possible you let out all your work on contract?—Yes.

M-1416. Have you attempted the system of direct employment, as against contract, in any cases?—Yes, we have, but it is not encouraged. We can very often get work done more efficiently by contract than by departmental labour. If we have not got the supervision for departmental labour we have got to employ contractors.

M-1417. *Sir Alexander Murray*: In your memorandum you speak of the number of accidents at the Government quarries as being 10 during the last 5 years, of which 3 were fatal; apparently compensation was only paid in 2 cases?—Yes. I understand Government had not to pay compensation in the case of one fatal accident; I do not know the circumstances of the case but I gather it was proved that the fault was with the employee.

M-1418. *Mr. Clow*: That is not necessarily a defence under the Act?—I am sorry, I am not conversant with the Act.

M-1419. *Mr. Cliff*: Is this convict labour?—No, it is free labour.

M-1420. Is it all free labour at these quarries?—No.

M-1421. Are these accidents which have happened to free labour or convict labour?—I have no figures as to convict labour.

M-1422. Can we take this as representing the accidents which have occurred at this quarry?—I think we can, with regard to all labour.

M-1423. *Mr. Clow*: Out of 10 accidents in only two cases was compensation paid?—That is so. The District Magistrate decides whether compensation is due or not.

M-1424. *Sir Alexander Murray*: Was that compensation paid by Government or by a contractor under Government?—Paid by Government.

M-1425. Can you imagine the Public Works Department doing its work without contractors ?—It would mean an enormous increase in our establishment in order to provide the necessary supervision. As a matter of fact, the tendency has always been the other way. I do not think we could do without contractors.

M-1426. *The Chairman* : You would agree that the scattered nature of your work is a leading element in that ?—That is so.

M-1427. That does not necessarily apply where labour is within a factory ?—That is so.

M-1428. *Sir Alexander Murray* : You know just as much as a contractor how much labour will be required to make a certain length of road ?—Yes.

M-1429. Why do you not make that road yourself instead of getting a contractor to make it ?—We would have to arrange for recruiting and feeding the labour ; we would have to have a great many more supervisors ; we would lose a lot of money through labour wanting advances and then running away. I believe contractors lose a lot of money through giving advances to labour and not recovering them.

M-1430. *Mr. Clow* : Who maintains the road ?—Government staff nearly entirely.

M-1431. *Sir Alexander Murray* : If you must have contractors, is there any reason why the contractor's labour should not be placed on your books and wages paid by you to them ?—It could be done. It would mean a lot of extra trouble to us.

M-1432. Would you like to have the duty of introducing it ?—No ; I do not see why we should have the extra trouble.

M-1433. *Mr. Cliff* : Is the maintenance and repair work on the roads done by direct employment ?—Yes, practically all of it.

M-1434. You have been answering *Sir Alexander Murray* in regard to contract labour for new works ?—Yes.

M-1435. *Sir Alexander Murray* : What work is done by the 10,000 unskilled labour employed by your department ?—They are principally maintaining roads.

M-1436. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Why do you not bring these 5,000 contractors' labourers on your books and pay them directly ?—If we did that we would be wiping out a certain number of petty contractors.

M-1437. There are lots of people who want to wipe out the petty contractors. When you have an opportunity of doing so, why do you not do it ?—There will naturally be a certain amount of agitation from a number of petty contractors who are making their living by these contracts.

M-1438. Is that the only reason ?—It is not the only reason. We do not want to assume responsibilities which are not necessary.

M-1439. Why do you give out works of every description on contract whenever possible ?—I think I am right in saying that some time ago there was an agitation against our doing too much work departmentally.

It was believed that departmental work was not as economic as contractor's work. There are cases where undoubtedly it is so.

M-1440. Why do these contractors usually sublet to petty contractors?—In cases of big works costing say a lakh of rupees and more which involve masonry, carpentry, earth work and so on, the contractor is allowed to employ *maistries* or sub-contractors. It is the only way in which the work can be done economically.

M-1441. As a practical man give us your opinion whether you could or could not dispense with contractor's labour?—It is possible, but it would be very difficult to do it. I do not think it is advisable.

M-1442. Would you be willing to do the type of work that you are doing without contractor's labour?—We could do it if Government gave us the necessary establishment. It would cost the taxpayer a good deal more and would create an enormous amount of opposition which we might not be able to get over.

M-1443. *Mr. Tait* : You pay your unskilled labour Rs. 15 to Rs. 30 a month. What is the average rate for unskilled labour in the vicinity of Rangoon?—In cases where they are employed by the month they get about Rs. 18 a month.

M-1444. *Mr. Cliff* : Do you employ any considerable amount of Burman labour?—The amount of Burman labour which we employ has increased recently. We employ a considerable number of them in places like Mandalay, Kyankse and Shwebo.

M-1445. Have you any figures with regard to the proportion of Burman labour to the whole?—No. In Upper Burma we employ Kachins and various other tribes.

M-1446. When you have a demand for extra labour, how is the demand met without Government making any special arrangement for it? Do the contractors recruit labour locally or from India?—The departmental labour usually replaces itself. If some members of a gang want to go home, the *mistry* replaces them by other labourers. They may come from India or they may be taken over from other works in the neighbourhood.

M-1447. What is your definition of large works where special medical arrangements are provided?—There is no actual definition, but I should say works where more than 500 labourers are employed in one place.

M-1448. In cases like that is there a regular consultation with the Public Health Department?—Yes. As a rule we have a Sub-Assistant Surgeon to look after the health of the coolies, and medical arrangements are made in consultation with the Inspector General of Hospitals. The Public Health Department inspects the camps whenever it considers necessary and advises us.

M-1449. What is the number of convict labour which you employ on your works?—I think there are about 2,200 convicts employed on our quarries.

M-1450. Are they also paid wages on the same scale?—The convicts are under the jail department and the jail department are the contractors for us.

M-1451. *U Hla Bu* : Out of your 10,000 unskilled labourers what percentage is Burman labour ?—I am afraid I have no figures, but I can say that the number is increasing.

M-1452. How long have you been in Burma ?—26 years.

M-1453. About 25 years ago was there not a Government order prohibiting the employment of Indian labour on Government works in Upper Burma ?—I have not heard of that.

M-1454. Would there be any difficulty in carrying out your works if such an order was made now, as a means of affording more employment to Burmans ?—In certain circumstances there would be some difficulty ; for instance there are certain places where the Burmese labour would not go and work. I can think of one place now, though it is not exactly in Upper Burma, and that is Pyinyaung on the Taunggyi road. Burmese labour does not go there. As a rule the Burmese labourer will work only near the village where he stays. Hitherto we have not been able to get Burmese labour to go to certain unhealthy places.

M-1455. *Mrs. Luce* : Is it because the contractors do not treat them properly and give them adequate housing accommodation and so on ?—No, and I am referring to Government works where the labourers are almost always housed.

M-1456. *U Hla Bu* : The Burmese Labour Bureau says there are 10,000 Burman labourers in Rangoon without any employment. Could you suggest any way by which we can find employment for these unemployed Burmans ?—They may go to other parts of Burma where work is available.

M-1457. There may be another 10,000 there also without employment ?—I do not think there is. As far as I know the Burman labour which we are employing on maintenance of roads is quite satisfactory and the Executive Engineers on the whole prefer it to Indian labour. The only thing is for the Burman labour to come forward and ask the Executive Engineers for employment.

M-1458. Unless you put in some such clause as I have suggested what chance is there for Burman labour to get employment ?

*The Chairman* : Are these contractors universally Indians or are some of them Burmans ?—There is a certain number of Burman contractors also, but curiously enough they prefer to employ Indian labour.

*U Hla Bu* : I myself am a contractor and I prefer to employ Indian labour because Indian labour is cheap, and I would always employ Indian labour unless we were prohibited by law. If the Burman labour is trained for a couple of years it will also become as cheap and efficient as Indian labour. At present I had a case in which I found that where the Oriya coolies could finish 100 c. ft. of earth work, the Burman coolies finished only 25 c. ft.

M-1459. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : On this road maintenance work, is the Burmese labour quite as efficient as Indian labour ?—Yes. As long as it does not involve continuous hard work such as earthwork. The Burmese labour is quite as efficient as Indian labour on this kind of light work. We pay them the same rate of wages as Indian labour.

M-1460. *U Hla Bu* : Have you not got a clause in the tenders to the effect that the contractors should compulsorily employ a certain number of Burman labourers ?—Yes, the clause is this :

“Where Burmese labour of a suitable nature is available such labour is to be employed by the contractor failing which, after three warnings given at not less than ten days’ intervals, if the contractor is unable to substantiate his reason for non-employment of the Burman labour available, his contract will be liable to cancellation.”

M-1461. Has not that clause become a dead letter in practice ?—It may be that the contractors have not been able to get suitable Burman labour. It is only recently since the present depression in trade that the Burman has come forward at all and wanted to work. He did not want to work before and the question is whether after the trade revives he will want to work later on.

M-1462. *Mr. Tyabji* : Has there not been a dispute between a contractor and his labourers at Ye ?—I do not know ; I have not been at Ye.

M-1463. In the case of your daily-rated staff, do you give Sunday off with pay ?—The custom is not the same all over Burma. We arrange with the labour that they are paid so much per month and on that we work out the daily-rate. If the labourer is absent for a day he does not get that day’s wage. But in some cases the labourers are paid for some non-working days in a month, such as Sundays and bazaar days.

M-1464. Why have you reduced the pay of engine drivers from Rs. 50—100 to Rs. 50 to 60 ?—The engine drivers were not employed continuously throughout the year when their pay was from Rs. 50 to 100. Now we want to make their employment continuous throughout the year and make them responsible for their machines. I think as a consequence of continuous employment, whether there is work on hand or not, the wages have been reduced slightly, I cannot say by how much.

M-1465. How do you decide how much a driver is worth ?—It is largely a question of negotiation and the ability of the driver. If he is a good driver and if he has worked for us for some time we would probably pay him as much as Rs. 100.

M-1466. *Colonel Russell* : What do you mean by saying that the contractors house their labourers temporarily when necessary ?—The contractor puts up bamboo and thatched houses if he cannot get housing accommodation in the neighbouring village. But very often there are rest houses in the village which can be occupied by coolies for weeks or months. If the work is expected to last for a long time the contractors put up temporary thatched houses for the housing of their labourers.

M-1467. Do you effect any supervision over the houses that the contractors put up ?—Only a general supervision.

M-1468. You have no clause in your agreement with contractors as to the amount of housing, conservancy and water arrangements that the contractors have to supply ?—No.

M-1469. Would you object to such a clause being put in in the agreement with contractors ?—No.

M-1470. Were the rules under paragraph 264 of the Public Works Department Code (Section XII) drawn up by the Public Health department and accepted by you ?—Yes.

M-1471. Dealing with the question of housing you use the phrase "Conservancy in the jungle is unnecessary". Do you think that the public health department sanction that statement in their rules ?—They may or they may not.

M-1472. Do you think that it is a fair statement ?—Absolutely. May I add that these rules in the Code refer to big works, while in my memorandum I am only referring to individual gangs.

M-1473. Gangs of what number ?—10 or 15.

M-1474. *Mr. Ahmed* : Am I right in assuming that the fines you recover from your workers and also the unclaimed wages are not utilized for the welfare of the labourers ?—Yes.

M-1475. Your men, I take it, have neither the benefit of a provident fund nor are they entitled to get any pension ?—That is so.

M-1476. In view of the many evils prevalent in the contract system, would it not be advisable if your department could do all the work under its direct supervision with an increased staff ?

M-1477. *The Chairman* : Have you anything to add to what you have said on that point ?—I do not think I have anything more to say.

M-1478. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : I think you make use of jail labour for quarrying ?—We have got 2,200 persons employed on quarrying.

M-1479. What rates do you pay for them ?—We pay the ordinary rates that we would pay in the open market.

M-1480. Can you tell us whether in the case of jail labour they are under the same factory rules as ordinary labour or other rules ?—I think they are entirely under the jail manual rules.

M-1481. So that the question of compensation does not occur in their case ?—I do not think so.

(The witness withdrew.)

**Captain R. B. RUSHALL**, representative of stevedoring firms in Rangoon.

M-1482. *The Chairman* : I understand you have been for very many years in Rangoon engaged in stevedore business ?—On the 13th of this month I will be 45 years since I landed in Rangoon. As a stevedore I have been in business for about 25 years. Previous to that I was in the British India Steam Navigation Company and the Irrawaddy Flotilla Company. Altogether there are six stevedore firms in Rangoon, but I speak on behalf of four firms, namely R. F. Comotto, Harikrishna Pillay, A. Vrsalovich and my own firm.

M-1483. Am I right that there is no permanent organization amongst you ?—Quite right. We have no master stevedores' association or anything of that sort. We never come together unless there is trouble.

M-1484. Have you ever considered coming together for constructive purposes ?—At the last strike we realized that it would be beneficial to all

concerned if we had a stevedores' association, and we wrote to Calcutta to see if they had anything of that sort to help us in forming a society in Rangoon. The reply we got from Calcutta was that there were only 2 or 3 stevedores who were members of an association and that the others were all outside it. We have not gone any further in the matter. Mr. Miller Stirling, I think, is the Chairman of the shipping committee of the Chamber of Commerce and he did promise that he would write and see if he could get something to give us a start. We approached the Boat Owners' Association to see what sort of rules and regulations they had, but we could get no assistance from them.

M-1485. What you have said indicates that you are prepared to come together and take a constructive view not merely for the protection but also for the improvement of your own industry ?—Quite so.

M-1486. *Mr. Cliff* : What proportion of the tonnage of the port is handled by the four stevedores whom you represent ?—I used to handle 1½ million tons before the trade depression set in. I cannot tell you what the other stevedores handle, but, outside the British India Steam Navigation Company—I must say that in all my answers to-day I will be excluding the B. I. S. N. Company—I think I would be justified in saying that I handle more than 50 per cent. of the shipping that comes into the port of Rangoon.

M-1487. Do the British India Steam Navigation Company handle more than that handled by all the four stevedores put together ?—I really cannot say.

M-1488. You have no association of stevedores, but have you a common understanding amongst yourselves with regard to the rates of pay to be paid ?—Yes, we all pay the same rates of pay.

M-1489. Have you an understanding with the British India Steam Navigation Company on that as well ?—No.

M-1430. How do you recruit your labour ?—We do not recruit it, but the *maistries* do. In fact, I think it is very doubtful if the *maistries* recruit it in the ordinary sense of the term. The labour, I think, comes automatically. For instance, I have men working for me who have worked in Patrick Henderson's for over 40 years, and they would come in spite of any *maistry*.

M-1491. Do the stevedores employ a number of *maistries* ?—Each stevedore has one head *maistry*.

M-1492. Does the stevedores rely on the head *maistry* for the supply of labour ?—Yes.

M-1493. Is it your view, speaking from your experience, that the *maistries* are able now to recruit all the labour they require here in Rangoon ?—Yes, I think so.

M-1494. How many people were offering for work on the docks in Rangoon prior to the strike ?—I cannot say.

M-1495. You have no rough idea at all ?—No.

M-1496. Have you any idea of the number who are offering to-day ?—There was only one ship this morning and she had *Coringhi* labour. I think there were about 400 Burmans but I could not employ one.

M-1497. Were there any Indians ?—There were as many Indians as I wanted.

M-1498. Does the head *maistry* pay wages ?—Yes.

M-1499. Are you not concerned with the wages at all ?—We pay the *maistry* five days after the departure of the ship. That is the system we have in Rangoon. The *maistry* makes a bill, so many coolies, so many *kamalis* and so many winchmen at so much a head. In addition to that we pay the *maistry* for every ship that works Rs. 2 per ship. If the ship works from 6 to 6 or half a day only the head *maistry* gets Rs. 2, but if she works in the night also he gets another Rs. 2. That is the head *maistry's* commission. The coolie is now getting Rs. 1-12-0 but we pay to the *maistry* Rs. 1-13-0 and thus the *maistry* gets a commission of one anna for every man employed.

M-1500. How many men would the head *maistry* have working under him ?—Suppose I wanted 40 gangs to-night on the river. My *maistry* would not have all the 40 gangs and so he would ask the other head *maistries* to supply him their gangs to make up the number.

M-1501. So he may have 40 gangs working at one time ?—Sometimes even more than that.

M-1502. But the commission which you have enumerated is paid to him ?—Yes.

M-1503. If he borrows any gang from other head *maistries* would he have to give them a portion of his commission ?—No. The head *maistry* has to keep a certain amount of clerical staff. In the busy season these clerks go round at 3 in the morning and wake up the workers to have their food and be ready to go to work in the day time. In the case of my own *maistry* he has 4 or 5 clerks, and he pays them out of this commission of an anna and Rs. 2.

M-1504. Who are the supervisors below the head *maistry* ?—We have foremen. Many of my foremen get Rs. 7 a day.

M-1505. Are they permanent ?—No, they are casual labourers.

M-1506. Do they get a regular standing wage, or are they paid any commission ?—They get no commission ; they get Rs. 7 for every 12 hours they work.

M-1507. In addition to the foreman is there such a man as a gang *maistry* ?—Yes, there is a gang *maistry* for each gang.

M-1508. How is the gang *maistry* paid ?—When I came into the business I found that there was always a man short, and I started counting these men. My head foreman said to me " You are making a big mistake. If you insist on the exact number they will do less work." A gang consists of 15 coolies including the *maistry*, but you will have 14 coolies only including the *maistry*. The gang *maistry* gets in addition to his usual pay one man's pay.

M-1509. He does that to-day ?—Yes.

M-1510. Does it mean that the gang *maistry* in effect gets the pay of 2 men and he says that 13 men must do the work of 14 men ?—Yes.

M-1511. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : Can they do it ?—Yes, they can. I told the *maistry* to give me 15 men including himself and that I would pay him one man's pay extra but he said ' no '.

M-1512. *Sir Alexander Murray* : How did you arrive at the figure of 15 for each gang ? Would it make any difference in the gang if there were only 12 or 13 instead of 15 ?—They would do less work in that case. This was the number long before the time I came here.

M-1513. *Mr. Cliff* : Taking the labour employed by the head *maistries* in these gangs, are any of them in permanent employ ?—No.

M-1514. Are any of them given preference ?—I myself sometimes give preference. If I have a ship that has a short space I myself tell the head *maistry* that I want this gang or the other, but ordinarily now-a-days the ships have ample space and we very seldom have to do that.

M-1515. Is there a good deal of labour that does not find regular employment ?—On the river we have no regular employment except for our permanent staff, that is the head foremen and supervisors.

M-1516. How many gangs would you put under one foreman ?—Usually 2 gangs.

M-1517. We have had various estimates given to us of the time worked by stevedore coolies in a month. Can you tell us from your experience the amount of time worked by stevedore coolies in a month ?—In the busy season for about 2 months or perhaps 10 weeks the men work practically night and day. But I think if it was worked out at the end of the year it would not average 12 days or certainly not more than 13 days a month.

M-1518. You do not mean to say that the men work continuously ?—Sometimes they do work.

M-1519. That depends upon the condition of the ship ?—Yes ; and in Rangoon it depends upon the number of ships that are in port.

M-1520. So that roughly speaking, as far as your experience goes, you say that on an average a man works for about 12 or 13 days in a month taking the year through ?—Yes.

M-1521. How often are the men paid ?—My system—and I think that is the system of the stevedores that I represent here this evening—is to pay 5 days after the ship sails.

M-1522. Is that money paid after the deduction of an anna by the head *maistry* to which you referred ?—I hand him a cheque for the full amount of the bill and he himself goes to the bank and cashes it.

M-1523. Does he make the deduction of an anna ?—Yes.

M-1524. With regard to any accidents that may occur on the dock or in the ship, who is responsible for seeing to the safety of the working of these gangs ?—We have now in Rangoon the Employers Liability Act. I will now speak for my own self. What I do is this : If a man meets with an accident, no matter how trivial it may be, I personally take him to the hospital. If I am not available one of my foremen takes him to the hospital. After that it becomes a factory case. In the case of men who are killed—I think Mr. Page will bear me out—we are only too glad to pay the compensation as laid down by the law. We do not hesitate about it.

M-1525. With regard to the provision for prevention of accidents, is there any examination of the slings or chains or anything of that kind ?—In Rangoon we have no place where we can test chain slings.

M-1526. Is there a place outside Rangoon for testing ?—Not in Burma, I think.

M-1527. Are there no rules or by-laws to which you have to conform ?—No.

M-1528. *Mr. Tait* : Are not the slings tested regularly by the Board of Trade and a certificate issued ?—I believe the gear is tested at home in England.

M-1529. *Mr. Cliff* : Is there no gear on the dock ?—The Port Commissioners have.

M-1530. With regard to dock slings is there any place for testing them ?—There is no place unless it might be the university where they could test chain slings or wire slings.

M-1531. What hours do the men work ?—We start at 6 and knock off at 5 ; the men work the same number of hours at night time.

M-1532. There is an hour between the finishing of one shift and the beginning of another ?—Yes.

M-1533. Is there any meal interval at all ?—No.

M-1534. How many days a week do they work ?—I have some men that are almost in permanent employment for the Patrick Henderson's steamers. They work about 10 days day and night, that is the day gang works 10 days and the night gang works 10 nights.

M-1535. Would they go on working 10 days without a Sunday off ?—Yes, they work on Sundays.

M-1536. In the space of 6 days a man works 66 hours ?—Yes.

M-1537. It has been suggested to us with regard to the strike which took place in 1924 that when that strike petered out, it was suggested or it was generally understood that there would be a concession of a mid-day interval. Is that so ?—The men were then getting Rs. 1-4-0 or Rs. 1-8-0 a day. They struck for Rs. 2. We decided not to give them Rs. 2, but that they might start work at 7 o'clock in the morning, knock off an hour at mid-day for rest, and knock off again at 5 o'clock in the evening. But the arrangement was never carried into effect.

M-1538. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : You wanted to reduce the working hours from 11 to 9 a day ?—Yes.

M-1539. *Mr. Cliff* : When the dock labour went back to work after that strike, were they given to understand that they would have a mid-day interval ?—I suppose they were.

M-1540. Can you give us any reason why that was not carried out ?—I cannot. It was announced in the Legislative Council that that concession had been granted, but personally I did not know anything about it till I read it in the local press.

M-1541. Does it mean that you did not agree to that, that was the position ?—It was certainly agreed that the men should start at 7, knock off at mid-day, start again at 1, knock off at 5, start at 7, stop at 12, start at 1 and knock off at 5 in the morning.

M-1542. *The Chairman* : Between whom was it agreed ?—I do not think we had very much to say in the matter.

M-1543. Was it agreed over your heads ?—Yes.

M-1544. By whom ? By the Government ?—I would not like to say it was the Government, but we know it was promised to the men.

M-1545. You as employers were not parties to the agreement ?—We were not, any way.

M-1546. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : Perhaps it was agreed to not by all but by some of you ?—I will tell you what I did. You know when a ship comes here with a good import cargo and she has got a big export cargo to load, she has got 10 days to do it in ; there is not much time to waste, and if you knock off 6 hours out of every 24, it is going to make a serious difference. In my own particular case, I bribed my men to start at 6 in the morning ; I paid them overtime, and they started work at 6. I paid overtime since the strike of 1924. Afterwards I stopped it. This overtime applied to the Patrick Henderson's liners, not to coolies for ships that come here to load cargo of rice.

M-1547. *Mr. Cliff* : Excluding liners like the Patrick Henderson's, what is the position now ? Are the men starting at 6 ?—They are.

M-1548. Is there some definite improvement ?—Yes, and the reason is that the *Coringhis* have realized that the Burman has come to stay, and unless he is better than the Burman he would be out of the job. So he starts at 6 on his own.

M-1549. What, in your opinion, was the cause of the last strike ?—In my opinion, there was a *hartal* on account of the arrest of Mr. Gandhi. But the men went on strike after that day's *hartal* for an increase of pay.

M-1550. They did not resume work ?—No.

*Sir Alexander Murray* : Did the earthquake have anything to do with it ?—It upset every one's nerves ; it demoralized the men to a certain extent.

M-1551. *Mr. Cliff* : As I understand the situation, the men struck for an increase of pay. Am I correct in saying that after the lapse of a number of days one firm of stevedores actually increased the rate of pay ?—Yes, it was I who did it. I had 17 ships lying in the port of Rangoon. All my work in life has been spent on the Patrick Henderson's flag. Naturally, I have a sort of affection for the company, and would do anything to help them out of a difficulty. The steamer *Sagaing* was lying with 86 passengers booked. I approached the representative of the British India Steam Navigation Co. on the first day of the strike and told him " You are a rich corporation ; give us the lead. Whatever you decide to do, I would follow ". They said they would not give the men an increase of pay. On the evening of the second day I was goaded to desperation. The representative of the British India Steam Navigation Co. said he had ample labour for all their ships. I had to admit that I had not one cooly. I again went up to him and said " Are you going to give us a lead or not ? Lock out if you want ; I will follow you ". He said he was not going to do anything. I went back to the jetty. I drove all my gang *maistries* away. I called all the coolies and told them that I would give an increase of 4 annas a day. They asked how long I was going to do it ; I replied, till the end of June. They wanted me to do it till the end of the year, and ultimately I agreed. That was at 5 o'clock. At 6-10 I had 35 gangs working.

M-1552. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Why did you drive out the gang *maistries* ?—Because I did not want them to influence the men. We worked all night on the *Sagaing*. The next morning there was a little excitement in the port of Rangoon. They said I was trying to ruin everybody and all the stevedores. I said, this is my business. My contracts are entered into direct with the owners in Great Britain or Japan ; there is no clause in my contract that I shall pay the cooly Rs. 1-8-0 or Rs. 2 ; I have contracted to load and discharge a ship at so much a ton ; it is my right to decide what I would pay the labourer. The extra cost for 2,500 tons for the Patrick Henderson's steamer demanded by the men was Rs. 157-12-0.

M-1553. *Mr. Cliff* : At the meeting that took place on Friday morning, you were overborne by the others ?—Had I not withdrawn my men from the ships, I should have been turned out of the business.

M-1554. Is it true that a few days subsequent to that, the same people who met you on Friday morning, at a further meeting agreed to pay Rs. 1-12-0 ?—The strike went on for about a fortnight. I heard from the banks and various places that the strike must collapse and that the shipping agents had refused to accede to the men's demands. I was quite sure the men were not going to give way. So, on Saturday morning I paid Burmese coolies for a day on board the ship they were working. I went round on Saturday with the feeling that the strike was about to collapse. I got the gang *maistries* together and told them " Tomorrow is the Sabbath ; no English captain will work on the Sabbath day ; you better go home and not come to the jetty ". At about 4-30 I was still going round when I received a pencil chit " Strike over. You may pay Rs. 1-12-0 after 6 o'clock this evening ".

M-1555. Was that chit from your coal stevedores and the British India Steam Navigation Co. ?—No, from a shipping agent.

M-1556. *Sir Alexander Murray* : You paid the Burmans Rs. 1-12-0 ?—I paid Rs. 2. The Indians refused to work for less than Rs. 1-12-0.

M-1557. *Mr. Cliff* : As I understand it, on the Saturday when the strike terminated, the men were told that they would receive Rs. 1-12-0 ?—Yes.

M-1558. Did that meeting resolve to accept Rs. 1-12-0 ?—Yes.

M-1559. They came to resume work on Monday ?—Yes.

M-1560. In consequence of a meeting between the men who had been on strike and the men who had been working in their place, there was a fracas which resulted in serious riots ?—There was a big row in Rangoon.

M-1561. I understand that eventually it was decided that Burmans and Indians should be employed roughly half and half ?—That was the arrangement.

M-1562. Was this arrangement ever put to the Indian labourers ?—There was an Indian gentleman on the Conciliation Board.

M-1563. I am not thinking of the Conciliation Board. I understand that on the Saturday first of all there was the offer of Rs. 1-12-0 ; the meeting eventually decided to accept Rs. 1-12-0. I understand that from some quarter this proposal to employ Burmans and Indians in the proportion of 50 and 50 was put forward. What I want to know is whether you have any

knowledge that this proposal was put to the Indian labourers?—As far as I know, there was His Excellency at the meeting of the Conciliation Board, and the shipowners' representatives and shipping agents were called to the Port Commissioners' to meet His Excellency, and it was proposed and accepted that fifty-fifty should be worked as near as possible.

M-1564. That was accepted by the stevedores?—By the shipping agents.

*Sir Alexander Murray* : We are speaking of that week end Saturday and Sunday when you told the Indians that they could resume work on Rs. 1-12-0 a day.

*Mr. Cliff* : I am speaking of what occurred after the riots.

M-1565. *Sir Alexander Murray* : On the day that you agreed to give Rs. 1-12-0, did you tell the Indians that they would get Rs. 1-12-0 but that Indians and Burmans would be engaged in the proportion of fifty to fifty?—I could not say. But on the Saturday evening when I came on shore I told my head *maistry* that the men would get Rs. 1-12-0.

M-1566. *Mr. Cliff* : As I understand it the point about 50 Burmans being engaged to 50 Indians was not put to the mass meeting?—They were told that at the mass meeting.

M-1567. *U Hla Bu* : That was after the riots?—That was when the Conciliation Board decided it.

M-1568. *Mr. Cliff* : Am I right in understanding that the stevedores and the shippers have made representations to the Conciliation Board that Burman labour is inefficient?—After the meeting and the decision about the fifty-fifty arrangement, we were called to the Conciliation Board and were told that the agents had accepted the arrangement. To make a long story short, we were simply told that we have got to work fifty-fifty Indians and Burmans to the best of our ability. One of the stevedores asked the Chairman "Is it usual for a man who goes to learn business to get the maximum pay to start with?"

M-1569. Has any such representation been made to the Conciliation Board within the last 6 or 7 weeks?—I do not know whether the shipping agents have made any representation or not.

M-1570. In this month of November, is Burmese labour more efficient than it was in the month of July?—Many people said that the Burmese could not do it well. I have demonstrated to the whole world that the Burmese can do it well. But the point is the expense. The export and import cargo of the steamer *Burma* amounted to 10,247 tons. Working with Burmese labour, the cost was Rs. 8,682-9-3. Indian labour at its present rate of Rs. 1-12-0 would have cost Rs. 5,284-11-3, which makes a difference of Rs. 3,397-14-0 to work the ship with Burmese labour. So far as the ship was concerned, she never carried better cargo in her life; she kept to time. She was well stored; when the ship was here, we made about 160 tons of space. The steamer *Amrapura* is a similar case. It is the cost the shipowner is objecting to.

M-1571. When was the steamer loaded?—Four weeks ago.

M-1572. *Sir Alexander Murray* : The increased cost was due to the long time taken to load the ship ?—We did not take longer. We employed more men.

M-1573. *Mr. Cliff* : The actual work is done quite as skilfully by the Burman as by the Indian ?—I would not say quite as skilfully, because we had to give them a great deal more supervision that with *Coringhi* labour. Ordinarily, we employ one foreman for two gangs, but for the gang of Burmans that I put on board I employed one foreman for one gang.

M-1574. Would you say that, in your opinion, in another six months' working, this extra cost for the Burmese labourers need not be incurred ?—If you mean to ask whether in six months' time the Burmese would be able to load a ship as cheaply as the *Coringhis*, I should say, no.

M-1575. *The Chairman* : Your point is that it does not matter to you as a stevedore if the agents decide on a policy of this kind ; they must pay for it ?—We are the servants of the shipowner. As our interests are wrapped up with the interests of the shipowner, we desire to work a ship as cheaply as possible, because our very existence depends upon it. We must be able to compete with our competitors.

M-1576. If the cost of the work is permanently too high, the port of Rangoon will suffer as a port : a certain amount of trade comes to ports in accordance with the economy in handling goods ?—In some of the discussions that took place during the strike, the cooly *maistries* were told that the cost would be so high that the shipowners would not send the ships to Rangoon. They replied that if they did not, the Germans and the Japanese would send their ships, and that Rs. 1-8-0 per day was not enough to feed their stomachs.

M-1577. *Mr. Birla* : It will cut the profit of the stevedores to some extent on account of the increased cost ?—Yes, it must do so.

M-1578. Will this increased cost be divided between the stevedores and the Port of Rangoon ?—Unfortunately, the Port of Rangoon is not employing Burman labour. That is why the shipowners feel it very hard. Government Departments are not encouraging Burmans ; they want Burmans engaged at the expense of the shipowner. The Port Commissioners are not employing Burmans.

M-1579. *Mr. Cliff* : It is suggested to us that the fifty-fifty arrangement is not being adhered to by the stevedores : Is that so ?—It is quite impossible to do it in that way. One ship comes for 10,000 tons ; another for 4,000 tons, and another for 1,200 tons. How are you to do it with the fifty-fifty arrangement ? In fact the Burman and the *Coringhis* do not expect to be exact. A steamship company has ships between here and South Africa : the steamer *Lakshmi* was here trading other day, she employed *Coringhis*. The next ship is the *Gujarat* ; she will employ Burmans. It is turn and turn about, and that is the nearest we can get to the fifty-fifty arrangement.

M-1580. On account of this fifty-fifty arrangement, a large amount of Indian labour must be unemployed ?—Yes.

M-1581. Is that labour still in Rangoon, or has it left Rangoon ?—It has left Raugoon, but they are gradually coming back in my opinion.

M-1582. Roughly the dock labourer gets about Rs. 20 a month ; do you think that rate of pay is exorbitant ?—No, I do not.

M-1583. Do you think they earn that Rs. 20 a month ?—If any Member of the Commission went aboard a ship and saw them hauling bags in the ship's hold, he would soon realize how they earn the money they get in 6 hours.

M-1584. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : You have told us that you have a busy season for about 8 to 10 weeks ?—Yes.

M-1585. During that time the gangs are employed night and day ?—Practically.

M-1586. When would those 10 weeks be ?—Beginning about the first or second week in February it goes on until the middle of April or the beginning of May.

M-1587. How many men would be employed in that peak period altogether ?—Say there are 45 ships working ; there will be an average of 4 gangs per ship, and there are 21 men in a gang.

M-1588. That would be 4,500 ?—Yes. I am speaking apart from the British India Steam Navigation Company, with whose men the total number I should guess to be about 8,000.

M-1589. During that rush period of about 3 months in the year, when there would be about 8,000 men employed, would each individual man be working 7 days a week ?—Yes.

M-1590. So that the individual man would be working 30 days a month ?—Yes, for that period.

M-1591. Is the present time, November, about the slackest time of the year ?—Yes ; to-day I have 16 men working. That slackest period is for 5 months from October to February. I should think a coolie on the river to-day is not getting two days' work a week.

M-1592. And in that very slack period two ships might come at once and then there might be nothing for a day or two ?—Yes.

M-1593. During that 5 months when work is slackest how many men do you have working ?—This month I should think I would be averaging 125 to 150 men a day.

M-1594. What is the largest number of men you would employ during this very slack period ?—The biggest number I employed in one day last month was about 260.

M-1595. On any one day during the slack months how many ships would you expect to be loading and unloading at the same time ?—About 5 or 6.

M-1596. How many men would that mean ?—About 4 gangs per ship ; it would be about 400.

M-1597. Therefore your peak day during that period would be only 400 men ?—Yes, excluding the British India Steam Navigation Company.

M-1598. How many men would the British India Steam Navigation Company be employing ?—I suppose about 400, but I am only guessing.

M-1599. So that, as a guess, if you and the British India Steam Navigation Company had 800 men available, you would have all the men you would want during 5 months ?—Yes.

M-1600. I suppose during the intermediary 4 months in the year more than 800 men would be required ?—Yes, I should think more than 6,000 men would be required to work the ships in port during those 4 months.

M-1601. During the year for 3 months you need 8,000, for 5 months 800, and for 4 months 6,000 ?—Yes.

M-1602. You have pointed out that you pay the *maistry* and he pays the men, taking off an anna in the rupee ?—Yes, and his Rs. 2.

M-1603. Do you think that is all he deducts, or do you think he gets a bit more in practice ?—We hear all sorts of rumours but I could not say if they are true. A lot of my men work for me all the year round and they would not tolerate it ; my men come to me with the slightest grievance.

M-1604. Would you say there is no money taken from the best men on regular work ?—There is not.

M-1605. But money may be taken from the less efficient men who are casual men who find it difficult to get work ?—Yes. Some years ago I found that one of my men had been pilfering belts ; I had to pay for 2 dozen belts and I deducted the cost from the bill. I afterwards found out that my *maistry* had deducted the cost of 6 dozen belts. I have not got that *maistry* now. That is the only instance I have.

M-1606. Do you think there is any delay by the *maistry* in paying the men ?—No ; in fact, all these men are in debt to the *maistry*.

M-1607. That debt is not due to what they owed for coming here ?—No, it is what they have taken in Rangoon ; they come to Rangoon, take an allowance to send to their families and sign an on-demand receipt. It is not for their passages ; my *maistry* certainly does not recruit in India : he gets the men here.

M-1608. He acts as a money-lender to the men ?—Yes, but of course he comes to us first for the money.

M-1609. Do you lend him the money ?—Yes ; my *maistry* generally owes me anything from Rs. 8,000 to 10,000.

M-1610. You think that is what he has lent to the coolies ?—Yes, that is his excuse for coming to get it.

M-1611. To how many men would that money be lent ?—I could not say.

M-1612. How many gangs has the *maistry* got more or less under his control ?—About 35 or 40.

M-1613. That would be about 800 men, so that it works out at an average of Rs. 10 a man.

M-1614. Sir Alexander Murray : Do they pay their *maistry* interest ?—I really do not know.

M-1615. Does the *maistry* pay you interest ?—No.

M-1616. *Mr. Birla* : All these stevedore firms are paid on piece-work, are they not ?—On tonnage rates.

M-1617. The stevedore firms employ *maistries* ?—Yes.

M-1618. Do those *maistries* employ *sub-maistries* or do they employ the labour directly without any other intermediary ?—The gang *maistry* might be called a *sub-maistry* ; the *maistry* tells the gang *maistry* to take so many men to such and such a ship. We do not deal with the gang *maistries*.

M-1619. Out of the money which is paid by those for whom the work is done, a share goes to the stevedore firm, a share to the *maistries* and a share to the gang *maistries* ?—I really do not know whether the *maistry* pays the coolie direct or through the gang *maistry* ; I have never been present when they have been paid.

M-1620. Have you ever considered employing the *maistries* on piece-work, that is to say, on a tonnage system ?—Most of our contracts would not permit us to sublet ; I myself would not be prepared to employ a coolie on tonnage rates, because he would scamp the work ; the blocking out has to be watched very carefully. I do not think any shipowner would allow us to sublet in that way.

M-1621. But is not your system equivalent to subletting ?—In the busy season the head *maistry* is not able to visit the ships, let alone supervise the work.

M-1622. Would you prefer to employ a *maistry* who employs a smaller number of men to do the work and so reduces the cost ?—No. I have some sympathy for the labourer and I am very angry if I find they have more than one man short in a gang ; I punish them very severely.

M-1623. From the point of view of efficiency I suppose there is some difference between different gangs of Indian labour ?—Yes, there is.

M-1624. I suppose you give preference to those that are more efficient ?—Where a ship is short of space or is in a great hurry, I personally select the gangs for the ship.

M-1625. Is it not in your interests to employ those men who are more efficient because that will allow you a larger margin of profit ?—Yes, but if we were to enforce that we should have a strike. In Rangoon we sublet by tonnage the discharging of coal and salt ; we sublet it to the *maistries* who employ their own men.

M-1626. Has the increased cost owing to inefficient work been at the expense of the shipping agent, or has it cut down your margin of profit ?—The shipowner pays the extra cost. When we were ordered to work 50—50 Burmans and Indians we could not work on a tonnage rate. I do not know whether any stevedore this coming year will tender for tonnage rate to work Burmese labour. The owners pay us the actual cost of the labour put on board ; one of the ship's officers is told off to check the labourers every morning and evening.

M-1627. And over and above that they pay you your supervision charges ?—Yes, 20 per cent.

M-1628. When did the first Burman do this kind of work?—I do not think it is generally known, but when I first came to Burma the ships used to be handled by Burmese labour; there was no Indian labour at that time. I would not like to state it as a positive fact, because I could not prove it, but I have an impression that the Government subsidized Indian labour to get it over here, and amongst ourselves we have said it is up to Government to subsidize the Burmese labour, the same as they did the Indian labour when they first brought it here.

M-1629. How did the Burmese worker disappear from the field?—Because the Indian labour was cheaper. Moulmein had a world-wide reputation for stowing timber; there was no port in the world where timber was stowed as well as it was stowed in Moulmein, and they were all Burmese workers. In fact, 25 years ago, if I had a difficult job, I used to go to Moulmein and get the Ghonds and men from Moulmein to handle the ship here in Rangoon.

M-1630. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: What were they paid?—I forget.

M-1631. *Mr. Birla*: When did Burmese labour reappear?—Every time we have had a strike in Rangoon we have called on the Burmans to break the strike.

M-1632. In normal times when there is plenty of Indian labour, is the Burman unwilling to work for the wages the Indian worker is getting?—No, I do not think so.

M-1633. Is it on account of the trade depression that you think you are getting more Burmans recently seeking employment?—Of course there is a great deal of unemployment.

M-1634. If Indian labour were stopped altogether, do you think you could get plenty of Burman labour?—If Indian labour were stopped altogether, the trade of the port and the trade of the Province would collapse.

M-1635. How long would it take the Burman labour to become as efficient as the Indian labour is at present?—I would say one year.

M-1636. You think in one year they will be equal to Indians?—Yes, but they will not be as cheap. I do not think the Burman will ever work for Re. 1 a day on board a ship. I believe the Burmese up-country if they came to Rangoon would very soon be as good as the Indians. If you travel up river you will see the way people carry heavy loads on their heads and that sort of thing. They are strong.

M-1637. Why do not you get them here?—I believe they would be glad to come. I was offered 500 men from up-country, but I could not take on 500 men as I had nowhere to house them in Rangoon: the work on board ship is casual work.

M-1638. *The Chairman*: I think the British India Steam Navigation Company do not employ stevedores; they have a cargo superintendent, a head *maistry* and a labour clerk, all on salary?—I believe so; I know they have a superintendent; I do not know anything about the clerk.

M-1639. Their trade represents just under half the cargo trade of the port, I think you said?—Yes.

M-1640. I suppose their cargo superintendent corresponds with you as a master stevedore ?—Yes.

M-1641. If the agents who employ you offered you a fixed salary in accordance with your ability and experience, would there be any difficulty ?—I should be delighted to take the job.

M-1642. You could give your executive skill to the business just as well as you can now ?—Yes.

M-1643. Then what is there that prevents the achievement of an object which would at first sight seem to be a desirable one ?—Some companies have one ship coming to Rangoon in two or three years ; I think Patrick Hendersons have between 24 and 28 ships a year ; Andrew Weir have one ship every month which comes for 1,200 to 1,800 tons of cargo. I think it would be much cheaper for the shipowners to employ a stevedore than to employ a superintendent. The owners would all have to amalgamate and they could only employ two or three superintendents. Shipowners, like other business people, do not care about everybody in the world knowing their business. I do not think it would work very well.

M-1644. From the point of view of the men do you think it would be better if this system of direct payment were adopted ?—We are paying the Burmese Re. 1-12-0 and the Ghonds Rs. 3. A lot of these men have had no work and they want their money daily. I cannot prove it, but I am told this is going on : money-lenders come down to the jetty and lend these poor people or give them Re. 1-4-0 for their day's pay, or at the very outside Rs. 1-6-0 ; so that the money-lender and the Ghond between them get As. 6. Nothing like that goes on with the Indians.

M-1645. Have you anything to suggest to the Commission by way of improvement on the existing system ?—If a system of three shifts of 8 hours each was adopted it would be of great advantage to the coolies, but I am not suggesting that it should be adopted because it would increase costs by 50 per cent., which the shipowners will find it extremely difficult to bear in these hard times.

M-1646. Under the stevedore system is it quite impracticable that payments should be made by you or your clerk direct to the worker, although he is recruited and organized by the *maistry* ?—It is quite impossible, because it would again mean increased cost to the ship-owners. We cannot possibly dispense with the head *maistry* both in the interests of the discipline of the workers and cost to the shipowners.

M-1647. We have been given from more than one source lurid accounts of the unhappiness of the coolie under this system whereby these various deductions are made, and there is one and sometimes more than one short in the gang and so on. From what you have told us already I gather that as far as your sphere is concerned you do not agree with those rather lurid accounts of the sufferings of the coolies ?—No, I do not. Taking on the whole, I think the coolie is a fairly happy man. He is not altogether as ignorant as some people might make out.

M-1648. I take it he does come to you in case of a bad *maistry* ?—Yes, he does and I take action.

M-1649. *U Aye Maung* : Was not the 50—50 ratio of Burman and Indian labour arrived at after consulting representatives of Indian labour, Burman labour and the shipping companies ?—I think, yes. But the stevedores were not consulted.

M-1650. If the shipping companies had agreed to this proportion why did they oppose this settlement afterwards ?—I do not know. I have seen several letters from different shipowners. So far as I know they are all ready to employ Burman labour, but in these hard times they feel it a great hardship if they have to pay extra for it. I do not think there is any shipowner who objects to Burman labour being employed. The question is one of cost alone.

M-1651. But when they agreed to the 50—50 ratio, did they not foresee what it would cost them to carry out their undertaking ?—Yes, I should think they knew what it would cost them.

M-1652. Again, did not the stevedores promise at one of the meetings of the Conciliation Board that they would use the offices of the Labour Bureau to employ Burman labour ?—I myself promised personally to work in harmony with the Labour Bureau. I am sure that all the stevedores were anxious to do it as much as possible.

M-1653. Is it not a fact that except yourself no other firm uses the Burmese Labour Bureau for engaging Burman labour ?—I do not know that.

M-1654. *Mrs. Luce* : How do you recruit Burman labour ?—I have a personal assistant. Both of us work in close co-operation with the Labour Bureau.

M-1655. Does he go on collecting habitual offenders from the streets ?—No. He is a respectable man and he takes care to select the best material available.

*Mrs. Luce* : I am asking this question, because the improvement of the efficiency of Burman labour depends so much on the manner in which they are recruited and engaged. If the Burmese Labour Bureau had been used in the way it ought to be used you would be getting efficient Burman labour.

M-1656. *U Aye Maung* : Do you yourself use the Burmese Labour Bureau not merely for recruiting labour but also in posting them and supervising them and helping them to become more efficient ?—My personal assistant and myself work in close co-operation with the Burmese Labour Bureau, but we cannot let any outside agency post men. It is impossible.

M-1657. *U Hla Bu* : If Government insisted on your employing Burman and Indian labour in the proportion of 50—50, would you propose that Government should pay the difference in cost ?—Yes.

M-1658. *Mr. Tait* : Do you realize that the shipowners cannot indefinitely continue to pay more ?—The shipowner is now doing his best. He is now being penalized. There is no Government Department in this Province which would do as much as the shipowners are willing to do. The other day I was on a committee which passed a resolution

that other things being equal, contracts should be given to men employing 25 per cent. of Burman labour. I think my friend U Hla Bu himself will not employ 25 per cent. of Burman labour. It is very hard on the shipowners to penalize them.

M-1659. *Mr. Tyabji* : What is the weight of a rice bag here ?—Rice shipped to Europe weighs 224 lbs. a bag. At the beginning of the season it will be  $\frac{1}{2}$  lb. or  $\frac{3}{4}$  lb. heavier in order to allow for evaporation. The bags sent to coastal ports in India weigh 2 maunds or 164 lbs. Then there is the tare of the bag.

M-1660. Do you not think that it is a comparatively heavy weight ?—Yes, it is very heavy weight for a man to carry all day long.

M-1661. Is it not a fact that the heaviest weight of cement bags in England is 240 lbs. and they employ special type of men to lift them and pay them double wages ?—Here again, if legislation is passed that rice should be put into smaller bags, who is going to bear the extra cost ?

M-1662. Do you not think that the men who carry these 224 lb. bags are physically strong ?—Yes, they must be fairly strong, otherwise they could not handle bags all day long.

M-1663. *Mr. Ahmed* : Do not your *maistries* go across to India and bring back gangs of coolies ?—Not as far as I am concerned. I suppose the coolies come and apply for jobs in Rangoon itself. My former *maistry* had not been to his country for 8 or 9 years.

M-1664. Then do your *maistries* get their gangs in Burma itself ?—Yes.

M-1665. Do not these coolies live and mess together ?—No. Sometimes one gang is spread all over Rangoon.

M-1666. Do not these coolies live huddled together in one room ?—I see you are referring to the living conditions of these coolies. If you go to-night to the 16th and 17th streets you will hardly be able to push a wheelbarrow, not to speak of driving your car, because the men will be sleeping on the streets.

M-1667. Are they not under any agreement with the *maistry* ?—I have never seen any agreement between the *maistry* and his men.

M-1668. Do you see that the *maistry* pays his men shortly after he takes the money from you ?—If any man does not get his pay he comes and tells me and I see that he gets it at once.

M-1669. Do not other stevedores delay payment to the *maistries* ?—I do not think so. Some stevedores pay every Sunday.

M-1670. *Colonel Russell* : Have you done anything in connection with the housing of your coolies ?—My coolies are only casual labour. It is quite impossible for an employer of casual labour to house them.

M-1671. Have your *maistries* had anything to do with the housing of your coolies ? We have had evidence that some coolies do live in houses that are rented by their *maistries* ?—My *maistries* have had nothing to do with housing their coolies. Some *maistries* rent a house and let it for coolies, but it does not follow that the coolies who live in those lodging houses work under the same *maistry*. The *maistry* of the lodging house may not be the same as the *maistry* of the gang.

M-1672. Would not the *maistry* give preference to men of his own gang ?—Yes, he would. None of my *maistries* have got lodging houses in their name.

M-1673. None of the *maistries* you know make additional profit out of the housing of the coolies ?—No.

M-1674. *Sir Alexander Murray* : If a *maistry* built a lodging house for housing the coolies in Rangoon would he not be a public benefactor ?—Yes, he would be a public benefactor, but he would not make any money out of it.

M-1675. *U Aye Maung* : Did you not give the Burman coolies who loaded *S.S. Bhama*, a reward of Rs. 100 for having given satisfaction by their work ?—Yes, I did.

(The witness withdrew.)

**BURMA.****Ninth Meeting.****RANGOON.***Tuesday, the 4th November 1930.***PRESENT :**The Rt. Hon'ble J. H. WHITLEY (*Chairman*).

Sir VICTOR SASSON, Bart.	}	<i>Assistant Commissioners.</i>	Mr. G. D. BIRLA.
Sir ALEXANDER MURRAY, K.T., C.B. E.			Mr. JOHN CLIFF.
Mr. A. G. CLOW, C.I.E., I.C.S.			Lt.-Col. A. J. H. RUSSELL, C.B.E., I.M.S. ( <i>Medical Assessor</i> ).
Mr. KABIR-UD-DIN AHMED, Bar-at-Law.			
Mr. J. TAIT.	}	<i>Joint Secretaries.</i>	
U AYE MAUNG.			
Mr. S. A. S. TYABJI.			
U HLA BU.			
Mrs. TE TE LUCE ( <i>Lady Assessor</i> ).			
Mr. S. LALL, I.C.S.	}	<i>Joint Secretaries.</i>	
Mr. A. DIBDIN.			

**U SET, Municipal Commissioner, Rangoon, Dr. K. DALAL, Health Officer, Municipal Corporation, Rangoon, and Mr. MANN, Chief Engineer, Municipal Corporation, Rangoon.**

M-1676. *The Chairman* : U Set, as Municipal Commissioner of Rangoon you are the chief executive officer of the Municipality of Rangoon ?—(*U Set*) Yes.

M-1677. I take it that the Corporation itself decides the policy and your duty is to carry out that policy ?—Yes.

M-1678. Have you not made any experiments with the employment of unskilled Burmese labour ?—In one or two small municipal gardens a few Burmese *malis* have been employed. These Burmese have to be paid a slightly higher wage than the Indian coolies.

M-1679. At present it is the policy of your Corporation to employ wholly Indian unskilled labour ?—That is so.

M-1680. And that labour is recruited locally by Indian *maistries* but it is paid direct ?—Yes, the labour is paid direct by the accountant of the department concerned in the presence of an officer.

M-1681. What does the *maistry* do besides recruiting ?—He supervises the work of the gang.

M-1682. Is he in some cases a worker, or is he merely an overseer ?—He does not usually work ; he is generally an overseer.

M-1683. What is the size of the gang that a *maistry* has, as a rule, to look after ?—From 10 to 20.

M-1684. The subordinate supervising staff are the persons next above the *maistries* I imagine ?—Yes.

M-1685. Are they Burmans or Indians ?—We have got Burmans, Indians and also Anglo-Indians.

M-1686. Is your decision to house the conservancy staff a recent one ?—Yes, soon after the last strike.

M-1687. Nothing beyond a decision has been taken at present, I take it ?—I have had schemes drawn up showing where suitable quarters can be built for these people and what the cost would be.

M-1688. When that is done what figure will it add to the 20 per cent. who are at present housed ?—It will add another 40 per cent.

M-1689. What is the total number of labourers you have ?—We have got about 5,000 labourers now.

M-1690. When this new scheme is complete you will be able to house at least 60 per cent. of your 5,000 employees ?—Yes.

M-1691. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Have you estimated the cost of the new scheme ?—My impression is that the estimate will be something like 5 to 8 lakhs according to the nature of materials used ; that is merely a rough estimate. I propose to suggest to the Corporation that we might budget for about 1½ or 2 lakhs a start with.

M-1692. *The Chairman* : You say that the municipal regulations relating to the minimum amount of floor space for each man are not carried out ?—We try to carry them out as much as we possibly can. As a matter of fact, some of the registered buildings were constructed before the new rules came into force. Under the old rules the owner of a registered building had to provide only 24 sq. ft. per man while under the new rules he has to provide 36 sq. ft. Last year, I think we launched about 2,900 prosecutions for breach of these rules.

M-1693. It seems to be generally agreed that 20 to 40 persons per room is rather a rule than an exception ?—Yes.

M-1694. I take it that until more housing accommodation is provided you are not in a position really to enforce your own rule strictly ?—That is the position.

M-1695. Has the Corporation any power to deal with the question of drink evil ?—No.

M-1696. It is helpless ?—It is practically in a helpless position.

M-1697. Is that solely a function of Government ?—Yes. The Corporation at one time was acting in an advisory capacity to Government with regard to the suitability or otherwise of opening a liquor shop in any locality. That was before my time. In one instance the Corporation's advice was not accepted by the excise authorities with the result that the Corporation refused to act as an advisory body any longer.

M-1698. Does any part of the municipal revenue as distinct from the State revenue come from these drug houses ?—No.

M-1699. Therefore the policy of the Corporation as so far declared would be greatly to restrict the facilities for drink and drugs ?—As much as possible within desirable limits.

M-1700. Does the policy of your Corporation go so far as to support total prohibition ?—I do not think the Corporation as a whole would be prepared to adopt that policy.

M-1701. May I take it that the only positive piece of policy of your Corporation is this decision to house your conservancy staff and in that way house 60 per cent. of the Corporation workers ?—Yes.

M-1702. You have no policy for municipal housing of workers other than those whom you employ ?—No.

M-1703. Has the Corporation any housing powers ?—It has an optional power to provide houses for working class people and also for poorer classes.

M-1704. But there is no proposal at present to exercise those powers ?—No.

M-1705. Can you tell me what is the area occupied by the jail premises ? Would I be correct in suggesting that it is about 90 acres ?—I cannot say definitely.

M-1706. Am I correct that there is accommodation for about 1,400 prisoners ?—Yes.

M-1707. Amongst those prisoners a number are life sentence prisoners and a considerable number are leper prisoners, I am told ?—I do not know.

M-1708. Would your Corporation approve the removal of that jail right away outside Rangoon and liberating that space for housing purposes ? Has that been considered at all ?—I do not think it has been considered, but I think the Corporation would certainly approve of such a proposal.

M-1709. *Sir Alexander Murray* : With regard to the description of housing conditions given in your memorandum, may I know whether they represent the views of the Corporation or whether they are your own views ?—They are the views of the Health Officer. It is a reproduction from Dr. Dalal's note.

M-1710. Do you endorse them personally ?—To a certain extent I do.

M-1711. You endorse them as the Municipal Commissioner representing the Corporation ?—Yes.

M-1712. May I enquire whether your reference to sweated labour in your memorandum is a fair description of the labour in Rangoon ?—I think so.

M-1713. *The Chairman* : Everything depends on the definition of the word " sweated " ?—Yes, by " sweated labour " I mean that they are a hard working lot and do hard physical labour.

M-1714. You do not mean under-paid ?—No.

M-1715. *Sir Alexander Murray* : I take it that as far as your responsibility for housing, conservancy, water supply and such other things are concerned, it is immaterial whether you have a migratory population or a static population ?—Yes.

M-1716. Therefore can we wipe out all this redherring about the labour being migratory and deal with the actual fact, namely, that accommodation is not sufficient for the requirements of labour?—The question of supplying accommodation to a migratory population would be different from what it would be if it were a static population.

M-1717. It is immaterial whether the population is a moving population or not; the fact is that there is overcrowding all the year round.—It is there in November, December and January in particular, and perhaps not quite so much in April, May and June when the people are going away?—Yes.

M-1718. On whom, do you say, the responsibility rests for housing this three-fourths of the population of Rangoon?—I should say, on the employers.

M-1719. I may agree that if there is a rice mill in the country somewhere, the employer should provide the housing for the labourers, or if there is a factory situated away from a town it may be the employers' responsibility to provide the housing. But Rangoon has its floating labour, its rickshaw coolies, its stevedore labour, its bunkering labour, and all the other labour that goes to constitute three-fourths of its population. Can you explain how in such a case you can confine to the employers the responsibility for housing this population?—In the case of those who come definitely for any employer, I think the employer should be made to look after their housing. As regards the rickshaw coolies, etc., I think it is the duty of the Government.

M-1720. *The Chairman* : It is not the duty of the Municipality?—I think the Municipality can be held responsible for people who are going to stay in Rangoon, but for the migratory population, I think it is the duty of the provincial Government, because that constitutes the labour not only for Rangoon but for all the other parts of the province. That is my personal opinion.

M-1721. *Sir Alexander Murray* : I accept the distinction between migratory and other labour. But there are always people overcrowded in Rangoon, it does not matter whether they are migratory or not. You say the employer should provide housing for labour. The figures that we have show that out of 300,000 or 400,000 people that come into Rangoon each year, anything from 15,000 to 25,000 are recruited specially. Even assuming that the employer must find housing accommodation for his labour of 15,000 to 25,000, do you suggest that it is the duty of Government to provide housing for all the rest of 300,000 people?—Personally, I think so.

M-1722. Is it the duty of the Government of India or of the local Government?—It is the duty of the local Government.

M-1723. You have no grievance against the Government of India that they are leaving undone anything that they ought to have done?—I have not considered that point. I think it is more the local Government's duty.

M-1724. *The Chairman* : I take it, to put it at a very low figure, 250,000 of these Indian workers are essential to the life and prosperity of Rangoon: you could not do without them. If they were removed tomorrow by a stroke of the pen, Rangoon would be gone?—That would be so.

M-1725. Would you still say it is the Government's duty ?—Out of this 250,000, I do not think all find their work in Rangoon ; some of them go to the districts. It is more a provincial affair than a local affair.

M-1726. I am taking off those who are on the way up-country. I am speaking of the life of the city and port of Rangoon alone. Would it be correct to say that 250,000 of these Indian labourers are necessary for the life and prosperity of Rangoon ?—Yes.

M-1727. Therefore, in that sense Rangoon could not do without them : her prosperity is based upon them ?—That would follow logically.

M-1728. *Sir Alexander Murray* : In what respect has the local Government failed to do something it ought to have done ?—I do not think the local Government has done anything at all.

M-1729. What do you think the local Government should endeavour to do ?—The local Government should, in co-operation with other public bodies like the Port Trust (the prosperity of the port depends on the prosperity of the town and *vice versa*) and the Corporation, should contribute towards the expenditure on account of housing labour. But I consider that primarily it is the duty of the local Government to take the matter in hand and do it themselves.

M-1730. What is the responsibility that you attach to the Rangoon Development Trust ?—I personally do not think that the Rangoon Development Trust has got very great responsibility in the matter.

M-1731. The Rangoon Development Trust was created 10 years ago for certain reasons that are mentioned in the preamble of the Act. In these 10 years I see that the Development Trust has done a great deal in the way of nice roads and that sort of thing. But has it done anything at all in connection with housing, to your knowledge ?—No.

M-1732. One of the reasons it gives for not doing so is that the cost would be prohibitive, that they would incur a loss by doing so : is that so ?—Yes. The Development Trust is not in a prosperous condition.

M-1733. Does it not apply equally to any private landowner that the cost of building workmen's houses is so prohibitive that it is not a business proposition ?—That would apply to the private landowner too.

M-1734. Going round Rangoon, we see a great deal of building work going on. Why is it that with all that building work going on no houses are being built for workmen ? Do you blame the builders of Rangoon for not taking the initiative in building houses for workmen ?—I do not think you can blame them for not doing it.

M-1735. Let us come to the ordinary owners of house property. We understand that the rents are prohibitive, and that as much as Rs. 36 rent per month is paid for space that almost could be covered by this table. Why is it that property owners will not build workmen's houses when rents are so dear ?—If they build houses designed for that purpose, probably they would not be able to get as much rent from the labourers as they are getting at present ; rents would probably go down with an increase in the number of buildings.

M-1736. One small room with a rent of Rs. 36 per month is shared by 18 labourers, each contributing Rs. 2. Do you mean to suggest that they would not be willing to pay Rs. 2-8-0 for a little more accommodation ?—I doubt very much whether the class of tenants you get would be prepared to pay Rs. 2-8-0 to get better accommodation.

M-1737. *The Chairman* : I take it your view is that accommodation for the lowest class of workers is not an economic proposition for the investor, as things are. Certainly, if your by-laws were enforced, the present conditions could not exist ?—The by-laws have been enforced as much as possible. About 3,000 prosecutions were instituted last year and about Rs. 17,000 were realized as fines from these prosecutions.

M-1738. *Sir Alexander Murray* : You have put it to us that it is the failure of the local Government to act that has been responsible to a certain extent for the housing conditions. In view of the fact that the local Government through the Development Trust owns about 3,600 acres, does not greater responsibility attach to the local Government of Burma to provide housing accommodation than attaches to the Governments of Bengal or Bombay who do not own any land at all ?—I am not prepared to answer that question.

M-1739. *Mr. Clow* : I gather that you agree with Sir Alexander Murray that in places where there are no houses at all, and employers start an industry, it is the employer's responsibility to house his work people ?—I think it is the responsibility of the employer.

M-1740. Does it not follow equally that where the existing housing is all occupied, any employers desiring to extend industry are responsible for housing their labour ?—Yes, that would follow from what I have already stated.

M-1741. In Rangoon you allow the occupants of the houses on the upper floors to throw refuse out of the windows ?—We do not allow it, but we have got no means of preventing them from doing it.

M-1742. You provide them with no alternative ?—The householders, I think, should make their own arrangements to bring the refuse down to the street, to be collected there.

M-1743. There is no place even in the street to put the refuse in ?—We have got dust bins in the streets.

M-1744. Not in the back lanes ?—No ; in front streets only.

M-1745. Do you not think if some means were provided people would use them ?—The whole question was discussed very thoroughly at one time, and no solution seemed possible.

M-1746. Do you take the view that if bins were provided, people would use them ?—I do not think they would use them ; they would simply throw it at the back.

M-1747. There are a good many tenants who take the trouble to grow flowers and try as far as possible to make their own houses beautiful. Do you not think that that type of man would be willing to use a bin, if it was provided, rather than make the back of the house dirty ?—Once they get rid of the rubbish, it will not trouble them at all.

M-1748. Do they like living in the sort of conditions that now exist ?—No. The analogy is different as regards growing flowers in the house and getting rid of rubbish.

M-1749. Growing flowers is surely evidence of their desire for pleasant surroundings ?—The people right up at the top probably will not be disturbed very much by the filth down below.

M-1750. Has the Municipality any control over the number of rickshaws on the streets?—No. That is done by the Police Department. The Municipality is responsible for the medical inspection of the rickshaw coolies. If they are not physically fit or are suffering from any disease that is likely to have a deleterious effect, they are not given licenses to pull rickshaws.

M-1751. Can you tell us from your experience if there are many more rickshaws in the cold weather than in the hot weather?—I do not think the number varies very much.

M-1752. We have been told that when an industrial worker who is engaged, for example, in a rice mill early in the year is thrown out of employment, he takes to pulling a rickshaw in the other months of the year. Does that agree with your experience?—I am afraid I cannot give you an answer to that question. My impression is that the number of rickshaws in Rangoon do not vary very much throughout the year. As a matter of fact, there are only 3,500 rickshaws, but the number of licensed pullers is 11,000.

M-1753. So that, the number of rickshaws may remain constant, but the number of rickshaw pullers may vary largely?—One pulls the rickshaw during the day and another at night. Ordinarily there are 2 pullers to 1 rickshaw.

M-1754. When employment is abundant, one man may pull the rickshaw all the hours of the day?—But the number of rickshaw coolies on the streets is limited by the number of rickshaws in existence.

M-1755. But the number of people engaged in rickshaw pulling can vary largely, though the number of rickshaws remains the same. For example, if employment in rice mills and elsewhere is abundant, you may have 4,000 men pulling 3,000 rickshaws; later, when men are thrown out of employment, you may have 10,000 men pulling those 3,000 rickshaws?—That is possible.

M-1756. *Mr. Birla*: How far has the Rangoon Corporation, as employer, tried to meet its own responsibility regarding housing?—We have provided for about 20 per cent. of our men, mainly in the conservancy department, and the policy of the Corporation now is to provide housing accommodation for 60 per cent. of its labourers. That would take 4 to 5 years.

M-1757. Apart from the question of supplying houses to its own labourers, what part has the Corporation played in the past in trying to solve the problem of general scarcity of housing accommodation for labouring classes?—I do not think the Corporation has done anything at all in that direction, except to agree to the suggestion of the Government that the tax on outgoing passengers from Burma should be increased from Rs. 2 to Rs. 3 and that the extra Re. 1 should be handed over to the Development Trust for the purpose of supplying this housing accommodation.

M-1758. Your Corporation was not expected to play any part in the scheme?—No.

M-1759. Did it ever occur to your Corporation that they might try to solve the problem by raising some loans with the sanction of Government?—I do not think the Corporation has any such idea.

M-1760. Are the private landlords in Rangoon mostly Indians ?—  
Yes.

M-1761. Do you think, on account of the movement for the separation of Burma from India, to some extent they are scared to put any more capital in housing property here ?—I know such a rumour was going round, but I do not think any intelligent landlord need have any fear on that score.

M-1762. Your memorandum says that 95 per cent. of your unskilled labour in Rangoon is non-Burmese. Have you ever made any attempt to recruit more Burmese labour ?—The Corporation has not done so, except in the case of half a dozen *malis*.

M-1763. When there is a growing feeling in favour of employing more Burmans in preference to Indians, how is it that your Corporation has not made any attempt in that direction ?—That feeling came about only recently, last May or June. The Corporation has passed a resolution now to give preference to contractors who undertake to employ a certain percentage of Burman labour, other things being equal.

M-1764. *The Chairman* : The Corporation does not do it in its own works, I hear ?—The resolution applies to works given out to contractors. I intended to put up a scheme before the Corporation, but I did not want to increase the tension that is at present existing between the Indian and Burmese labour. If the Corporation decides to employ 20 per cent. Burman labour, the Indian labourers might cause trouble. I think you can get a fair number of Burmese labourers coming forward.

M-1765. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : Are you replacing vacancies with Burmese labour ?—Not yet.

M-1766. *Mr. Tyabji* : As regards giving preference to contractors who employ a certain percentage of Burmese labour, other things being equal, do you take into account the cost ?—You cannot have the cost exactly equal.

M-1767. What would be the difference ?—In a contract for Rs. 20,000, if the difference is Rs. 300 or Rs. 400, it would not matter.

M-1768. *Mr. Birla* : When was that decision arrived at ?—About 2 weeks ago. We have had no occasion to put that decision into practice so far.

M-1769. How do you compare Burman labour with Indian labour in general efficiency in such work as the construction of roads ?—I have seen Burmese labourers employed on road work in Upper Burma, and from what I heard from the P. W. D. officers they think that Burmese labour is quite efficient.

M-1770. *The Chairman* : That is not your personal experience ?—No.

M-1771. *Mr. Birla* : Why are you not in favour of total prohibition ? Do you think that Government will suffer by it ?—I was not looking at it from the point of view of revenue at all. Personally, I do not think it will be possible. Though the Buddhist religion prohibits drink, in Upper Burma you find the men drinking toddy.

M-1772. It is not the defect in the principle ; it is the defect in the administration of it probably. If it were possible, would you like to have total prohibition ?—I do not think we ought to go to that extent.

M-1773. *Mrs. Luce* : Regarding what you say on the extent and effects of disturbance of family life, if the Corporation of Rangoon were to provide suitable housing accommodation, would that not induce the labourers to bring their families along and settle down here ?—I doubt very much whether you can do it. In the housing scheme that I was speaking of, I am making provision for 10 per cent. married quarters.

M-1774. That would induce the labourers to bring out their families ?—That I cannot tell.

M-1775. *Mr. Cliff* : You are providing housing for your conservancy staff, which is Indian labour ?—Yes. From our experience we thought 10 per cent. married quarters would be a fairly sufficient provision.

M-1776. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : Will that be enough when you increase the percentage of Burman labour later on ?—No. In that case more married quarters will have to be provided, because as a rule a Burman labourer will not give up family life.

M-1777. *Mr. Tait* : What is the number of your conservancy staff ?—3,000.

M-1778. Is it not a fact that Burmese labour will not undertake conservancy work ?—Not night soil conservancy, but they will undertake day conservancy work if they are given a sufficiently high wage.

M-1779. Would it not be manifestly unfair if they got a special selected class of work that they would undertake ?—It would be.

M-1780. If Burman labour wishes to take its due share of the work available in the Corporation, they must be prepared to enter the conservancy department as well as other departments ?—I think so, in theory at any rate.

M-1781. On the question of contractors employing a certain percentage of Burman labour being given preference, if there was some difference in the cost, the Corporation would agree to pay the extra cost ?—Yes, if the extra cost is not very much. I am expressing my personal opinion.

M-1782. Do you consider that the ratepayers of Rangoon would be prepared to pay more merely to provide Burmese labour with work ?—The question is whether it is the right policy to encourage indigenous labour or not.

M-1783. The position for the moment is that it has been passed by the Standing Committee, but not accepted by the Corporation ?—Yes. As a matter of fact, I put a definite proposal before the Roads and Buildings Committee, but it was not accepted.

M-1784. *Mr. Cliff* : A considerable proportion of the ratepayers in Rangoon are Indians ?—Yes, about two-thirds.

M-1785. *Mr. Tait* : You mention that the minimum wage for unskilled labour now has been raised to Rs. 18 per month in the Corporation. May I take it from that that you consider Rs. 18 a month represents a fair wage for unskilled labour in Rangoon ?—I think it is a somewhat low wage, though you can get men to work on that wage in sufficient numbers, due to the supply being more than the demand.

M-1786. *The Chairman* : That wage is for all the year round work ?—Yes.

M-1787. Does that include free housing ?—Yes ; it is free housing *plus* Rs. 18.

M-1788. *Mr. Tait* : That more or less represents the standard of wages a coolie expects here ?—Yes.

M-1789. Am I not right in saying that the number of licenses for rickshaws is to be reduced until eventually they are eliminated altogether ?—The matter has been discussed but no definite decision was come to, as far as I am aware.

M-1790. *U Aye Maung* : When you said that if the coolie population of Rangoon were taken away, Rangoon would be down, were you referring to the industrial concerns or the middle class ?—Of course Rangoon will remain but not Rangoon as it is.

M-1791. But would it affect the middle class of Rangoon ?—Yes, middle class people depend on the coolies, unless you can replace the Indian labourers with Burmese labourers.

M-1792. Is there any prospect of that ?—I do not think there is any immediate prospect.

M-1793. Do you think the presence of the coolie population in Rangoon is dangerous to the middle class from the point of view of health ?—Yes.

M-1794. *The Chairman* : You think that the presence of this population does add to the risks in the matter of health ?—That is because they are not properly housed and looked after ; it is not their presence in itself.

M-1795. But the trade and prosperity of Rangoon are dependent upon their presence ?—Yes.

M-1796. *U Aye Maung* : Do you not think the housing problem will be reduced if unemployment in Rangoon is solved ?—There is a certain amount of unemployment among the labourers in Rangoon, but if you restrict the number of immigrant coolies to the number required, you will probably do away with that problem and to some extent the problem of housing as well.

M-1797. Do you agree with the statement of the Burma Railways that the immigrant coolies here send their savings to India and that has a serious effect upon the economic welfare of the Province ?—Even if that is so, there is such a thing as a balance of trade and Burma must get back that wealth in some other shape. It is an academic question.

M-1798. *U Hla Bu* : What is the total number of unskilled labourers you employ ?—About 5,000.

M-1799. What percentage of that number is Burmese ?—We have no unskilled Burmese labourers ; we have a fair proportion of skilled Burmese labour.

M-1800. I take it that the recruitment of your labour is done by the *ministry* at the request of inspectors and overseers ?—Yes.

M-1801. Not by the heads of departments ?—Appointments are made by heads of departments.

M-1802. But the *maistries* are asked to bring in the labourers ?—That is the usual practice.

M-1803. Are these recruiting officers, such as *maistries*, overseers and inspectors, Indians ?—Laterly there have been a few Burmans, and there are Indians and Anglo-Indians.

M-1804. I understand you to say that the Corporation has passed a resolution to the effect that 25 per cent. of the labour must be Burmese ?—No, but that any contractor who undertakes to employ not less than 25 per cent. of Burmese labour should be given preference, other things being equal.

M-1805. The object is to relieve the unemployment of Burmese labourers to a certain extent ?—It is to encourage Burmese labour to come forward.

M-1806. Are you aware that there are about 14,000 Burmese labourers out of employment in Rangoon ?—Yes, I was told so.

M-1807. Are you aware that crime in Rangoon is worse than in any other place ?—I have not studied the criminal statistics.

M-1808. If that is so, would you ascribe it to the unemployment of these Burmese labourers ?—Probably to a certain extent small thefts and robberies are due to that cause.

M-1809. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : Is crime in Burma less than it was 10 years ago ?—No, it is more.

M-1810. *U Hla Bu* : Do you not think it will be difficult in practice to give preference to Burmese labourers ?—Yes.

M-1811. Do you not think it would be better in calling for tenders to invite tenders at alternative rates for Burmese labour or any other labour ?—I suggested that to the committee that considered the matter, but it was not accepted.

M-1812. *Mr. Tyabji* : You have said that you are paying Rs. 18 to the conservancy labourers ?—It has just been raised to Rs. 20.

M-1813. Is it within your knowledge that those of your conservancy labourers who work at night also work in the day ?—Yes ; I am trying to stop that now.

M-1814. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : Have they licenses to pull rickshaws ?—Yes.

M-1815. And are you stopping those licenses ?—No, I am allowing the present men to carry on as before, but in future a man taking on this employment will be made to understand that he must not take on any work in the day outside.

M-1816. And I suppose he would lose his license as a rickshaw coolie ?—Yes.

M-1817. *Mr. Tyabji* : Does not that prove that the wage you are paying is not sufficient for them ?—I do not think it proves that, because there are others who are not engaged on outside work in addition ; it merely shows that the man wants to earn extra money.

M-1818. The Municipality has power to make rules with regard to the sanitation of mill and factory barracks, inspection, provision for storm water and so on ?—Yes.

M-1819. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Does it include order for white-washing periodically or anything of that description ?—Yes.

M-1820. *Mr. Tyabji* : Do you use your full powers with regard to industrial housing in Rangoon ; have you made the industrial housing as perfect as your by-laws enable you to ?—No. We have inspected these houses as much as could be done with the staff available. We issue notices and if the requirements are not carried out, we prosecute the landlords.

M-1821. Have you had any opposition from the industrialists with regard to this ?—Not that I am aware of.

M-1822. *The Chairman* : You told us of a large number of prosecutions for overcrowding. Have you ever noticed that the consequence of a prosecution is that the number of persons in a room is promptly reduced from, let us say, 40 to 10 ?—No, I do not think so.

M-1823. The fine is paid and things go on as they were ?—Yes.

M-1824. I was anxious to know whether these numerous fines had produced any effect ?—No.

M-1825. *Mr. Tyabji* : Are you quite sure objection has not been taken to your notices ?—I am not aware of any objections being taken ; the sanitary staff have taken whatever action they can to have the requirements of the sanitary rules carried out by the landlords and the millowners.

M-1826. Have you had many prosecutions with regard to the mill barracks ?—There have been prosecutions but I do not think there are very many.

M-1827. Do you not think that the ground underneath these coolie barracks which are raised from the ground should be drained so that during the rains the water may not stagnate there ?—Everybody will agree that that should be so if possible.

M-1828. Has that been enforced ?—No, I do not think so. In the case of tidal creeks I think it would be rather difficult to impose that sort of requirement, because at high tide the water will come below the floor of the building.

M-1829. But where that is not so have you taken any steps to get the land so drained that the water may not stagnate underneath ?—No, I do not think we have taken any action in regard to old buildings, but in new buildings we insist upon that requirement, that is to say, that the floor of the building should be properly drained and sloped.

M-1830. Will your building schemes be an economic proposition if you charge the labourers a rent of Re. 1-8-0 ?—Including the water supply, taxes, sinking fund, interest on capital at 6 per cent. and ground rent, the maintenance works out at about Rs. 3-4-0 per head per month. It is not an economic proposition.

M-1831 : *The Chairman* : Do you propose to charge a rent ?—No, but that is the cost of it. That was rather an expensive type of building we put up at Stockade Road ; they were brick buildings of three storeys.

M-1832. *Mr. Tyabji* : If houses for labourers are to be built, would it be better to have them very close to the central town or a little away from it, like Botatoung and Ahlone ?—I do not think they should be in the centre of the town ; they should be outside the town but there should be facilities for the people to get to their places of work.

M-1833. If you got away from the centre of the town would you be able to get permission from the Port Commissioners for sewage outfalls ?—It is under discussion now as to whether we can have any more sewage outfalls into the Rangoon river. The extension of the sewage system depends also upon the extension of our water supply system ; without water supply it will not be possible to extend the sewage system : the two are interdependent, and both are under discussion.

M-1834. I understand you are undertaking a very large scheme of water supply which will probably be laid down in two or three years time ?—Three or four years.

M-1835. I understand the objection to the sewage system is on account of the gases it raises in the river ?—That is the objection raised by the Port Commissioners.

M-1836. But are you not able to overcome that difficulty ?—Not yet ; I am suggesting to the Local Government that the Rangoon Sewerage Committee should be reconstituted.

M-1837. But have you no suggestions to make with regard to getting rid of these gases ; I understand that could be done ?—We have not discussed that yet.

M-1838. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : Have you considered a sewage farm ?—No ; we are now in negotiation with the Port Commissioners. A sewage farm will be very expensive.

M-1839. *Mr. Tyabji* : Do you think that for, say, the shipping labour housing at Dalla would be convenient ?—Yes, if you can get suitable sites at Dalla.

M-1840. You could there utilize the same system of water reservoirs as you are now proposing ?—That has been under consideration for a long time but no definite decision has been arrived at yet.

M-1841. It would be better to house labourers outside the town, because that would be better from the point of view of the health of the town and it would give the labourers more room for recreation ?—Yes, but it will be difficult to house the casual labour who are not in the employment of any definite company.

M-1842. *Col. Russell* : You have a separate Municipal Act for the City of Rangoon, have you not ?—(*Dr. Dalal*) Yes.

M-1843. Under that Act the Rangoon municipality has much wider powers than mofussil municipalities ?—Yes.

M-1844. In fact I think it would be fair to say that the Rangoon municipality is outside Government control altogether ?—I think so.

M-1845. Do you think that is a proper position for it to be in ?—Government has a controlling hand if the Corporation fails to carry out any of its powers under the Act ; the Government can step in at any moment they like.

M-1846. But there would be an objection on the part of a municipality to any interference except perhaps in what might be called an extreme emergency ?—I think Government is well protected under the Act ; they have got ample powers.

M-1847. You do not think it would be advisable for the public health authority to have the same control over the Rangoon Municipality as they have over mofussil municipalities ?—I do not think so, because Rangoon is a big city.

M-1848. Can you give any other reasons for your opinion ?—It is a big corporate body and when they can undertake such big works I do not think there is any necessity for any Government interference unless they fail in their duties. (*U Sct*) The Rangoon Corporation's Health Officer is a qualified health officer ; he is a D.P.H., and has four assistant health officers with similar qualifications working under him.

M-1849. Other municipalities have health officers ?—But I do not think they have such a big and highly qualified staff.

M-1850. So that the Municipal Corporation of Rangoon would have a decided objection to any change in this respect ?—I think so.

M-1851. You say in your statement that the death rate among the males is uniformly higher than among females. Do you think that is correct ?—(*Dr. Dalal*) Yes.

M-1852. Let me read to you some figures for Rangoon which no doubt you supplied to the Director of Public Health, and which appear in his annual report : Male Muhammadan death rate, 24 ; female 43 ; male Hindu death rate 28 ; female 54. Those are the figures for 1928. The figures for 1929 are : Male Muhammadan death rate 21, female 44.8 ; male Hindu death rate 25, female 58 ?—I have not made that statement from the Rangoon figures ; I must have taken that from some book on vital statistics.

M-1853. Do you accept the figures which I just now gave as regards Rangoon ?—Yes, I do.

M-1854. With reference to those figures would you still maintain that position as regards Rangoon ?—Not under those figures.

M-1855. You say in your report that a great majority of the population is composed of migratory labour population, which means that a great majority are young adult males. But you say in the same report that they consist of age groups which are less favourable to long life, whereas your figures of Hindu and Muhammadan death rates which are apparently taken for this migratory population are exactly the opposite of what you say ; they are very low. Would you explain what you meant ?—There is the question of poverty, unemployment, drink and unhealthy living, which makes the death rate higher than what it would otherwise be. Out of the total population, 13 per cent. are below five years and over 50 years.

M-1856. In that case if you had 87 per cent. of the population between the ages of 5 and 50 you must have a low death rate and you actually have the low death rates of 22 for Hindus and 25 for Muhammadans as against 42 for Burmese males. Would you care to amend

your views regarding the age and sex distribution ?—The report was written in 1926 in connection with the Rangoon Health Enquiry. I am now out of touch with it and I am not able to see wherefrom I took those figures. If I was given time I would refer to the books and explain the matter.

M-1857. You mean you would want to arrive at different conclusions ?—We took a particular subject and had to concentrate our attention on it and find out the relevant facts and figures.

M-1858. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Is it the case that no burial or cremation can take place in Rangoon without the knowledge of the Corporation ?—Yes.

M-1859. Therefore the death figures must be correct ?—Yes, they must be, but not so the figures of birth, because there are so many unregistered births.

M-1860. *Col. Russell* : Even allowing for poverty, ignorance, drink and so on, do you accept the death figures of 22 for Hindus and 25 for Muhammadans ?—Yes, I do.

M-1861. How do you say that infantile diarrhoea is the cause of thousands of deaths when you have had only 866 in 1928 and 915 in 1929 in Rangoon ?—I am not talking of Rangoon there, but I am referring to the seasonal prevalence of infantile diarrhoea all over the world. I am particularly referring to England in this place.

M-1862. Why then did you put this in a report dealing with Rangoon ?—To show that Rangoon is not the only place where people die of diarrhoea and that children and infants die of summer diarrhoea, which is common all over the world.

M-1863. I beg your pardon ; that is not the case. With regard to the density of population how have you arrived at your figure of 168,800 per square mile ?—By calculating the population as in the census of 1921 with the area in square miles of the various circles of the town. For instance, Turoktan has an area of 0.13 sq. mile and a population of 21,949. If 0.13 square mile has a population of so much, what is it per one square mile ?—By the simple rule of three we get the density.

M-1864. With regard to tuberculosis you say that the higher the density the greater the incidence of tuberculosis. Turoktan has the highest density and its death rate from tuberculosis is 4.87 whereas Theinbyu which has density of 26,000 and comes 11th on the list has a death rate of 3.6, next highest to Turoktan. Could you explain why this is so ?—It is a *cuchha* area ; it is not a sewered area. There is a large Burmese population also.

M-1865. Out of how many cases of small-pox did you find that 228 cases were imported ?—The total number of cases reported during that year was 1,956.

M-1866. Is that a very high proportion ?—I think so ; it is nearly 10 per cent. 10 per cent. of imported cases living together in crowded rooms undetected for days together is not a small factor.

M-1867. *The Chairman* : Have you no powers to inspect the coolies on arrival ?—Since 1928 all the immigrants arriving by sea are inspected and vaccinated if necessary. But a large number of people come into Rangoon by rail from the districts.

M-1868. *Mr. Cliff* : Has the number of imported cases been reduced since 1928 ?—We have had no epidemic of small-pox since 1928.

M-1869. *Col. Russell* : Is there no vaccination done in the districts as well as in Rangoon ?—Yes, there is, but most of these 228 imported cases were Indians.

M-1870. Is there no system of re-vaccination ?—Yes, we have introduced a system of re-vaccination recently. In 1928 an Act was passed under which every coolie entering the province has to be vaccinated. Besides that the Health Officer has the authority to re-vaccinate a child when it attains the age of 12.

M-1871. With regard to plague do you believe that the best method of prevention is to kill a proportion of the rat population ?—I believe so.

M-1872. Have you read Major Norman's report to the League of Nations Health Committee wherein he says that Rangoon requires a large number of rat-proof rice and paddy godowns in order to check the outbreak of plague ?—I have read that and I agree with Major Norman. I have myself stated that in one of my reports in 1924 to the Corporation and asked the Corporation to make by-laws insisting on rat-proof godowns.

M-1873. *Mr. Cliff* : Was your recommendation accepted and acted on by the Corporation ?—No, I think they have simply recorded it.

M-1874. *Col. Russell* : Has the Corporation done anything to carry out the scores of recommendations made in the 1926 report on the health of Rangoon ?—Since February 1930 the Corporation have separated the Health Department from the Conservancy Department and appointed a whole-time officer in charge of conservancy. That officer resigned after six months and a new officer has now been appointed and it is too early to say whether it has effected any improvement in the conservancy of the city.

M-1875. Is this officer under your direction ?—No. He is directly under the Commissioner.

M-1876. Do you depend for your 3,000 conservancy staff on Indian workers ?—Yes, we do.

M-1877. If immigration of Indian workers was restricted as has been suggested by some witnesses, would you be able to carry on without Indian sweepers ; would you be able to get indigenous sweepers ?—I doubt it very much.

M-1878. Would it not be possible to provide a large number of dustbins in the back spaces for the collection of rubbish instead of having the refuse scattered all over the ground as at present ?—That is one of our schemes. We can prosecute people for throwing rubbish in the back spaces, but we do not want to do it without providing dustbins to throw these rubbish in.

M-1879. Have you made any arrangements to prevent the back spaces from being flooded with sewage surplus ?—I made a report in 1924 making some suggestions to prevent this thing happening. It is an engineering question and that department will have to take it up.

M-1880. How long is the present state of affairs to be allowed to go on?—Indefinitely?—It depends on the Corporation. The matter has been before them for the last four or five years.

M-1881. With regard to prosecutions for overcrowding your fines come to Rs. 5 and odd per case at the rate of Rs. 17,000 for 3,000 prosecutions. Do you think that the punishment is adequate to the offence?—The fines are levied by honorary magistrates. We can only ask for heavier fines.

M-1882. Suppose during the next rainy season you enforced your by-laws in a particular block and turned out the excess population from that block, what would happen?—They would go to other blocks.

M-1883. But the other blocks are fully occupied already?—They would become worse.

M-1884. If you did this, would not some action be taken?—That is why we are increasing the number of prosecutions since 1925. We do not want to persecute the people unnecessarily. Even 3,000 prosecutions are not an easy matter.

M-1885. *Mr. Cliff*: Have you got power to expel a person forcibly out of one of these lodging houses?—No, we cannot use physical force; we can only prosecute.

M-1886. *Col. Russell*: Is it the case that certain house owners are able to bring pressure to bear on municipal councillors and prevent any progress being made in the matter of housing?—I cannot give any opinion on that point.

M-1887. Have you got sufficient hospital accommodation in Rangoon?—No, the hospital accommodation is inadequate. We have 515 beds in the Rangoon General Hospital and 100 beds in the Ramakrishna Mission Hospital. There are 230 beds in the Infectious Diseases Hospital and they are quite sufficient for infectious diseases. But with regard to civil hospitals on the basis of 3 beds per 1,000 of the population there should be 1,200 beds, whereas we have only about 600.

M-1888. Have you got a sufficient water supply for Rangoon?—We have a supply of about 12 to 13 million gallons of water per day, but a large part of it is wasted. There is a department under the Chief Engineer which is trying to prevent waste.

M-1889. How far have they succeeded?—(*Mr. Mann*) Due partly to the prevention of waste and partly to re-arrangement of the distribution the total amount of water we are supplying is less than what it was three years ago.

M-1890. Are you giving an adequate water supply to all parts in Rangoon?—No, there are many areas in Rangoon which are not supplied with water at all.

M-1891. Would it be possible to extend the water supply to the Ahlone area which has been described as a suitable place for housing coolies?—The supply is sufficient only for the area which is at present supplied with water. It is not possible to extend the area of supply without affecting the area already supplied with water.

M-1892. *Mr. Cliff* : What is the average length of service of your Corporation employees ?—(*U. Set*) It is rather difficult to say because some people are kept on temporary service and others on permanent service. Some may get themselves invalidated or may retire after 15 or 16 years' service and it is very difficult to give an average.

M-1893. When you were giving evidence before the Health Enquiry Committee, I see that on the conservancy and the veterinary staff you had 3,555 people. Can you tell me whether they are in permanent service ?—Yes.

M-1894. How long do they stay with you on the average ?—It is difficult to say.

M-1895. *The Chairman* : These are people who go home every 3 or 4 years ?—Yes ; they go on leave and come back again.

M-1896. *Mr. Cliff* : May I take it that a great bulk of your people stay 10 or 15 years ?—Yes.

M-1897. Do you think that the corporation employees who are paid Rs. 20 a month can house their wives and families in Rangoon under suitable conditions on that wage ?—Not under suitable conditions.

M-1898. Do you advise the Corporation generally on all matters affecting the Corporation ?—Yes, I make my own recommendations.

M-1899. Have you made any recommendation to the Corporation with regard to any housing schemes for the population of Rangoon ?—No.

M-1900. Is it your view that the Corporation of Rangoon has no responsibility for housing the population of Rangoon ?—I think it has responsibility only to a very limited extent. Its responsibility would have been greater if the population had been an indigenous population.

M-1901. What do you mean by saying " a limited extent " ?—I have already explained that primarily the Local Government is responsible for housing and also other bodies like the Port Trust.

M-1902. I heard you speaking, first of all, about the responsibility of the employers and then I heard you suggesting that it was the duty of the Local Government and such bodies as the Port Trust. I was anxious to discover where the Corporation came in. If it is the view of the Corporation that employers should house their working population properly, what steps have the Corporation taken to enforce that ?—The Corporation does not take any action except that when the employers themselves build quarters for their coolie population the quarters are inspected from the point of view of health.

M-1903. What representations has the Corporation of Rangoon made to the Local Government with respect to housing in Rangoon ?—Not any since I came to the Corporation.

M-1904. What does the ' limited extent ' really mean ? May I know whether the Corporation of Rangoon accepts any responsibility, be it limited if you will, in respect of housing accommodation ?—I do not think the Corporation as a body has so far accepted any liability.

M-1905. The Corporation as far as you know has not by any express declaration accepted any responsibility ?—No.

M-1906. Does that mean that the Corporation accept the housing conditions as they are at present in Rangoon and has taken no steps whatever to ameliorate them ?—So far the Corporation has done nothing in that direction. I do not want to commit the Corporation to any view that I may express, but I think the view of the Corporation would be that the question of improving the housing condition in Rangoon should be taken up by the Local Government and the Corporation would be prepared to contribute if necessary a certain sum towards the expenditure for carrying out any scheme that might be devised.

M-1907. Do I understand that you have not made any representation to that effect ?—That is so.

M-1908. Is there any other city of the size of Rangoon in the whole world that has not accepted responsibility for housing the working classes ?—That I do not know.

M-1909. We are informed that the Corporation provides accommodation for a proportion of its employees, but as these are not built on modern lines and have no accommodation for married men and families, the conditions are almost as bad as in the older type of lodging house. Do you agree with that ?—So far, yes. In the future building scheme to which I made a reference I propose to make provision for married quarters.

M-1910. *Mr. Ahmed* : In one of the papers submitted to us there is a reference made to the rickshaw puller. The statement says " The one prominent question that occurs to my mind is whether rickshaw pulling is dangerous to human life. Experience shows it is. The Rev. C. F. Andrews says that it has been reckoned that the strain on the heart is so great and the danger of chills and chest diseases owing to exposure is so common that the average life of a rickshaw puller is hardly more than five years in duration." May I know whether Dr. Dalal agrees with this view ?—(*Dr. Dalal*) ? I agree with that view, and I shall be the first person to support any measure to abolish this inhuman form of conveyance.

(The witnesses withdrew.)

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**Mr. E. J. L. ANDREW, Rangoon.**

M-1911. *The Chairman* : You were for some time the Assistant Protector of Immigrants and Emigrants in Rangoon, were you not ?—Yes, for 11 years from 1919 until 1929.

M-1912. I observe that the duties of the Protector of Immigrants and Emigrants are defined in the Government Resolution of the 5th April 1918, and they appear to have a very limited scope. They refer only to the conditions of deck passengers in their transit from India and back to India and have nothing to do with the condition of Indians once they have landed in Burma ?—That is so.

M-1913. During those 11 years was your whole time occupied in attending to the needs of the passengers in transit ?—Having been in Rangoon for about 18 years previously and knowing the conditions under which Indians were living I actually did more than what I was required

under that notification ; that is, I used to go about visiting these people in their homes and seeing in what way I could be of any assistance to them. Of course it must be remembered that in 1919 (that is just after the war) the shipping trade was in a disorganized condition, and it was extremely difficult for people to obtain passages because a large number of the steamers of the British India Steam Navigation, Co., who were practically the only passenger carriers, were held up by the Government. What I really did was to divide the men into batches so that there would be as little inconvenience to the people as possible in getting passages back to India.

M-1914. Although your official duties and responsibilities were really confined to the transit of Indian labour you were attempting to understand and ameliorate the conditions of the workers after they had reached Burma ?—Yes.

M-1915. Would you agree that the total immigration of Indian labour comes to about 320,000 or 350,000 a year ?—That is the total number, but I may explain that that figure is fallacious because it includes a very large number of people who are non-labourers who travel in deck.

M-1916. I only want what in your opinion, in a round figure, represents the total immigrant Indian labour ?—200,000 ; that is practically the actual Indian labour force employed in Burma.

M-1917. Do you mean to say that 150,000 of the passengers are other than labourers ?—Yes.

M-1918. Out of that 200,000 how many, in your opinion, are recruited by *mistris* or their agents on the other side ?—About 30,000.

M-1919. That is a higher figure than has been given by other witnesses.—It is almost impossible to say whether 25,000 or 30,000 is correct, but in my estimation I think it is nearer 30,000 than 25,000.

M-1920. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Are not the deck passengers usually labourers or their wives or children ?—Not necessarily because in my experience—(and I think it is generally admitted) a very considerable proportion of the deck arrivals consists of people who are not truly speaking labourers ; that is, you have a large number of people who are money-lenders, traders, and clerks and others employed in Burma returning from leave and also new-comers.

M-1921. *The Chairman* : You put the extent of recruitment by *mistris* and their agents in India as high as 30,000. Still taking your own figures that would be about 1/6 or 1/7 of the total, the remainder coming voluntarily to Burma and being recruited after their arrival here ?—Yes.

M-1922. With regard to your suggestion that this migration should be put under control on a system somewhat similar to that which applies to emigration from Southern India to Malaya and Ceylon, do you wish to apply that control to the whole body including those who now come voluntarily or only to those who are recruited on the other side by *mistris* ?—It should apply to the whole body.

M-1923. No doubt you are aware that both in the Federated Malay States and in Ceylon the labour is required in the main for one purpose, the purpose of the plantations, and the employers therefore are accus-

toned to act together and with more or less common interest. But you propose to apply that system to the case of Burma where they are scattered amongst a great number of employers, large and small, in a large variety of industries. Do you think the case is comparable?—No. My view is this : of the total number coming into Burma, Burma can do without a large part of it. If you introduce some restriction you would get labour coming into Burma to meet only the actual requirements.

M-1924. Suppose the present number of immigrants is 300,000 and you wish to cut it down to 250,000, who would, in your opinion, decide the numbers that were to be allowed ; would it be Government or the employers?—I think the central agency would be the Government. The employers would let the Government know from time to time what their actual requirements are so that the Government would be able to fix the number. The number need not be stationary year after year but may vary according to the requirements.

M-1925. As 6/7ths. of these travellers are not assisted passengers but come at their own expense, you would then have to put a prohibition that nobody could come to Burma without a license?—If Burma is separated from India, as seems to be quite probable in the near future, I do not see why Burma should not do anything that she wishes to do.

M-1926. As long as Burma is part of India, would you contemplate the prohibition of the movement of labourers from India to Burma?—Yes ; though I see the difficulties, these should not however be insuperable.

M-1927. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : Is it your suggestion that immigration into Burma should be on the lines of what is done in the United States, where they restrict the immigrants to a certain quota?—The position is that a considerable section of Burmese public opinion has been pressing for some time past for the prohibition, and I take it total prohibition, of Indians. I recognize that without Indian labour Burma cannot get on. She must have the number that is absolutely necessary to man her industries, both agricultural and otherwise. So that, my solution is certainly less drastic than what Burman public opinion advocates.

M-1928. *The Chairman* : In the paper you have sent to us you refer to a book which you are about to publish. In that book, when it comes, shall we find that you develop this suggestion on the practical side? I presume that you have looked at it all round and the difficulties?—I have.

M-1929. You state that the Indian comes for a period somewhere between two to three years ; he goes back to his country, and he may or may not come back. Also many of them move about in Burma following one industry for part of the year and another occupation for the other part of the year. Under those conditions and with your knowledge of India, would you yourself think it was desirable that they should bring their wives and children with them?—Most decidedly yes.

M-1930. And take them back again at the end of 3 years, or become permanent settlers here?—Whether they become permanent settlers or not is a matter of their own option. But we know that as a result of the Indians being encouraged to bring their women folk the sex ratio in Malaya has improved wonderfully.

M-1931. But you are aware that there is work for the women on the plantations, and that does not appear, at first sight, possible for the women if they came over to Burma?—There need not necessarily be work for them. They would help towards the creation of better home life. It would mean that you get a better class of citizen.

M-1932. Whether they are going to work up at Namtu on the mines, or at Yenangyaung on the oilfields, or in rice mills, or here in Rangoon, still you would advocate encouragement being given to bring their wives and children with them?—Yes.

M-1933. Regarding the deductions that are made by the *maistries* from the net wages supposed to be paid to the coolies, what is your suggested remedy for that practice?—The first is direct recruitment; secondly, direct payment of wages by the employer. By direct recruitment I mean recruitment other than through the agency of *maistries*.

M-1934. Recruitment at the door of the works by the actual employers?—Not necessarily. If my suggestion was adopted and you had restrictions, it would mean that every labourer brought into Burma would come in free of debt; he would not be under the control of the *maistry*. He should be recruited otherwise than through the agency of the contractors or of *maistries*.

M-1935. As regards recruitment in Burma, by the *maistries*, do you suggest that the *maistry* is altogether a useless person who can be dispensed with?—Nothing would please me more than to see that these contractors are removed.

M-1936. Suppose the *maistry* is in the position of a gang leader or overseer?—As long as he has anything to do with getting the men for employment, these evils will continue.

M-1937. Therefore, you would have the recruitment done by the real employer, the *maistry* being only engaged at a fixed payment as an overseer and the payment of wages direct to the men themselves?—Yes.

M-1938. Does your suggestion take into account the way in which people from one village hang together, that the *maistry* is very often known to them through their lives, coming from the same village and, as we have been told in some places, they would not work under any *maistry* other than the one they know?—That has not been the experience of the Burmah Oil Company in Syriam and Yenangyaung. They recruit direct and pay direct.

M-1939. In Yenangyaung they have to pass through the Labour Bureau on engagement and also on dismissal. But that is not to say that what appears to be the Indian custom of men working under and with *maistries* or gang leaders that they know is entirely abolished in favour of the individual system?—I do not believe there would be any difficulty.

M-1940. Have you any suggestion to make to the Commission with a view to lessening the perpetual indebtedness, other than the points you have made including the direct payment of wages?—If encouragement was given to them to bring their families across, I believe there would be a fall in the percentage of drunkenness, which would naturally lessen the amount of indebtedness.

M-1941. Do you think that the Indian practice of attaching a man's wages for debts is a factor that increases the readiness of the money-lender to lend and therefore the temptation of the worker to borrow ?—I have not considered that point.

M-1942. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : Would you consider that the figure of 30,000 of assisted direct recruited labour is an increasing one or diminishing one ?—It is fairly constant.

M-1943. As I understand it, you want in future labour to be so controlled that all labour coming here shall be medically examined at the port from which it leaves India ?—If the Indian Government makes that rule, you will have to observe it.

M-1944. From the point of view of Burma, would you not prefer to have healthy men coming into the country ?—Obviously.

M-1945. So, you would like to have a medical examination before they left India ?—Yes.

M-1946. Would you prefer them not to be allowed in this country unless they had already some occupation guaranteed to them ?—It would amount to that.

M-1947. Would you prevent people with independent means coming here on their own ?—No.

M-1948. You are merely talking of the cooly labour ?—Yes.

M-1949. Government would have to ask the various concerns how many men they wanted before they settled on the figure and under each class ?—Yes.

M-1950. That is for average permanent labour. How would you deal with a rice mill that would want labour only for part of the year ?—Government can find out almost accurately the actual amount of permanent labour required, and also the amount of casual labour needed by the rice mills.

M-1951. Would you allow the rice mill to indent for workmen to be used only during the season, or would you insist on employment being offered for the whole year ?—You cannot insist on that when the rice mills are closed for six months in the year.

M-1952. You would allow the firm to indent from the Government for labour for the season only ?—Yes.

M-1953. How would you employ that labour during the off season ?—The people who cannot get any work would be repatriated.

M-1954. Would that be paid for by the employer ?—If you had an Immigration Fund, that fund would have to pay for it.

M-1955. The employer would have to pay for his journeys both ways as also his wage ?—Yes, as he would contribute to the fund.

M-1956. It would cost the employer more than under the present system ?—If you measure it in terms of greater efficiency and better work, I think it is more or less balanced.

M-1957. Would you insist on the employer paying for the passage of the wives and families of the men who came over here ?—Only if they were coming here for permanent employment.

M-1958. If the employer proposed to employ that labour for three or four months, would you insist on the wives and children of the labourers coming with their husbands during those 3 or 4 months?—I do not insist upon it. I suggest that it would be highly desirable to encourage it.

M-1959. Who would pay for their passage?—If they are to be employed in rice mills (a certain number of women would be required for work there) the employers should pay for their passages.

M-1960. What is the percentage of women employed in rice mills?—It is small.

M-1961. What about the passages of the other wives and children?—I have not considered the scheme in detail.

M-1962. Let us assume that the employer is in Rangoon. Is it not a fact that there is a great shortage of housing here?—It is a fact.

M-1963. Would not that shortage be aggravated if you advocated that the wives and children of the labourers, even though they may have no employment, should come with their husbands?—It is obviously the duty of the employer to provide housing accommodation for the labour he employs.

M-1964. And their wives and children?—I do not see why he should not.

M-1965. Has the question of cost ever occurred to you?—It has occurred to me. You have to face a practical question, and though you may desire to encourage the immigration of the women, the number that will take advantage of the encouragement would not be so great as to be a burden on the employer.

M-1966. You think it would not be expensive for the employer to buy land and build houses not only for all the labour that he employs, casual or otherwise, but also for their wives and families?—I do not think that the wives of all the labourers would come, although under encouragement their number will be greater than at present. It would be a considerable number of years before the number becomes alarming.

M-1967. Supposing a labourer had two wives and several children, would you like him to have the right of insisting on their passages being paid for?—I do not think he is entitled to more than one wife.

M-1968. Have you ever thought of any possible method of decasualising at any rate part of the labour in Rangoon, so that there might be a smaller number of people working for more days in the month than at the present time?—I have not thought about it.

M-1969. You suggest direct employment by employers without the assistance of *maistries*: is that just a recommendation to the employers, or do you suggest that there should be legislation preventing employers from using the *maistries* in that capacity?—If legislation is possible, I should advocate it, but I have not considered what form it should take.

M-1970. *Mr. Ahmed*: Is the contract system of labour still in existence?—Yes.

M-1971. These *maistries* go to India, misrepresent the facts, and bring the workers who are heavily indebted to them: is that so?—Yes.

M-1972. On account of the debts, these people cannot get out of the clutches of the *maistries*, and the *maistry* gets a certain percentage as his commission or profit : is that so ?—In addition to his commission, he takes a large slice of the wages.

M-1973. If these people do not like to work under the agreement, they cannot go outside until they have served their period of engagement. Is it not a fact that they put their thumb impressions on the agreements, and they cannot get out of them because the magistrate prosecutes them for breach of contract ?—The magistrate does not prosecute ; it is the *maistry* who becomes the prosecutor.

M-1974. *The Chairman* : Do you know that the Breach of Contract Act was repealed three years ago ?—Yes.

M-1975. *Mr. Cliff* : In cases where the *maistries* give advances in India and charge interest, do they recover them in the courts in Rangoon, to your knowledge, or do they not ?—The coolies tell me that they recover it by civil process, because the agreements are also acknowledgments of debt.

M-1976. *Mr. Ahmed* : After the advances are made, these people cannot go to any other place to work and get out of the clutches of the *maistries* ; is that so ?—They are afraid to go ; they are afraid of the *maistries*.

M-1977. These *maistries* huddle them together in a mess where they can hardly breathe, and live in a hopeless condition like beasts and the employers in Rangoon too get a number of men to huddle together in a room where they can scarcely sleep : is that true ?—One has only to see the housing conditions to know the facts. The *maistries* do overcrowd their coolies. If you are the renter of the building, the house owner does not care whether you put in one person or 100 persons.

M-1978. *Mr. Cliff* : Would you make it clear whether there are men who are styled *maistries*, but who have nothing to do with employment, but are purely lodging house keepers ?—There are two classes of *maistries* ; the lodging house keepers, and the men who are supervisors, who rent the building and house their coolies.

M-1979. Could you say whether there are a large number of these persons, and what class of labour it is that these *maistries* operate amongst ?—All the lodging house keepers are not connected with labour as supervisors. The labour that finds accommodation there from time to time is labour which finds work in all spheres ; so far as the Telugus are concerned, it is primarily dock, casual and shipping labour.

M-1980. Do they cover a large proportion of the labour ?—I should say about 25 to 40 per cent. of the labour employed in Rangoon is covered by these two classes of *maistries* together.

M-1981. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : What percentage is under the supervising *maistries* who are also lodging house keepers ?—I cannot say definitely, but I should say a fairly high proportion. In the case of Oriyas the hotel keepers are practically all solely lodging house keepers.

M-1982. Does such a *maistry* insist on his own men living in that house ?—No. He engages it ostensibly for the labour which he is responsible for. He places that labour in the house which he rents, but it is within my knowledge that there have been other men living there.

M-1983. *Mr. Ahmed* : By 'slice of wages' do you mean that "if there is a rate of one rupee for carrying 100 baskets of paddy, the head *maistry* deducts 6 per cent. in the busy season and about 12 per cent. in the slack season of the amount payable to the paddy coolies, and passes on the balance to the sub-*maistry* who, in turn, makes a similar deduction, charges one rupee for clerical work and takes the share of two persons by adding them to the actual number of workers in an arbitrary manner".

*The Chairman* : I observe you are not quoting from Mr. Andrew's own memorandum ; you are quoting from a witness who is not before us.

*Mr. Ahmed* : I am asking the witness if it is correct.—I am not prepared to answer that question.

M-1984. What is the slice of wages you mean ?—From the calculation I have made I find that only 40 per cent. of the wages paid by the employer reach the pockets of the coolies.

M-1985. *The Chairman* : I suppose part of it goes to the *maistry* and sub-*maistry* for supervision ?—No ; if Rs. 10,000 was the actual sum that was to go to the labourers, I say that only 40 per cent. of that sum actually reaches the coolies.

M-1986. *Mr. Ahmed* : Suppose I say it is absolutely repugnant to British ideals and the ideals of those who by association have accepted British notions of integrity, that coolie *maistries* should as parasitic financiers live luxuriously by creating a system under which the coolie's body is held as security for an initial loan enabling him to enter the country, would that be right ?—I am not concerned with opinions expressed by anyone else ; I am only responsible for my own opinions.

M-1987. *Mr. Cliff* : When you say that unskilled contract labour is employed at rice mills and in other commercial organizations which obtain their labour by recruitment through the agency of *maistries*, and that the condition of this class is infinitely inferior to that of the classes referred to above, what do you mean by "other commercial organisations" ?—Dock and shipping labour, for instance.

M-1988. Is it your contention that a considerable proportion of dock, shipping and rice mill labour is recruited in India ?—No ; what I contend is that whether they are recruited in India or Rangoon their disability is the same, that they start off with that disability and continue under that disability for the rest of their lives.

M-1989. Would you admit that there is a difference between labour recruited in India owing a considerable amount of money which has been advanced in order to recruit them, and labour recruited here in Burma without any system of advances ?—It is within my knowledge that labour recruited in Rangoon is also given advances. The advances in India may be anything from Rs. 10 to as much as Rs. 300 and Rs. 400.

M-1990. Is the great mass of labour in Burma really recruited by *maistries* ?—I said about 30,000 ; that is my estimate.

M-1991. Have you any suggestion which you have considered which you can put before us with regard to the actual engagement of labour here in Burma ?—I have not really troubled to work out the details.

M-1992. *The Chairman* : You have never thought of putting your proposals into a statute and saying; for instance, that no *maistry* shall engage any other man, and he shall be sent to prison if he does ?—I hardly considered it was within my province as a private individual to do so. I am not a lawyer.

M-1993. *Mr. Cliff* : Have you any suggestion to put before us which you think would be an improvement on the present system ?—Direct employment by the employer.

M-1994. That would mean that an official or clerk of the employer would be substituted for the *maistry* ?—I do not think employers would find any difficulty in getting the labour they require directly ; I do not think it is essential that they should have a *maistry*, but it suits the employer to have a *maistry*.

M-1995. Is the state of affairs described in paragraph 100 (a) of your memorandum obtaining during the current year ?—Yes.

M-1996. How could you satisfy any body of men as to the truth of that statement ?—If I had a chance of questioning a body of labourers without any influence on the part of the employers I think I would get them to admit the truth. I am not referring to the European employer ; I am referring to the contractors. The moment the contractor and the *maistries* know that their labour is going to be questioned, the men are frightened into denying everything.

M-1997.-I suppose there is nothing in writing which can be adduced as evidence ?—There is unfortunately no documentary evidence.

M-1998. You are saying to the Commission that if you could get a number of baggage coolies away from their employment they would be prepared to state that this is true so far as they are concerned ?—If it were possible to get these men without the knowledge of the contractor and the *maistries*, I think you would get the truth out of them.

M-1999. This Rs. 9 a month which you say these men are forced by the contractor to pay is outside any question of debt or interest ?—Yes. To the outsider who does not know the ins and outs of this, I agree it may appear inconceivable ; it is only one who has had an intimate knowledge of the actual facts month after month and year after year that knows this is true.

M-2000. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : You appreciate that out of these Rs. 5 which you say are left to the coolie, he would have to pay the interest and repay the capital of the amounts he has borrowed ?—The baggage coolies have not borrowed any money.

M-2001. *Mr. Cliff* : Do they reside in Rangoon ?—Yes. These coolies demand and extort payment for the carriage of the luggage of all passengers arriving at Rangoon, of whatever class the passengers may be, though the steamship companies distinctly say that the coolies are paid by the company and their service is free, and have put up notices to that effect on the ship.

M-2002. *Sir Alexander Murray* : You say in effect that every baggage coolie pays Rs. 15 to somebody for the privilege of being a baggage coolie ?—He pays first of all Rs. 41 to get the job and then he is made to pay Rs. 15 a month to remain a baggage coolie.

M-2003. Then you say that in the case of temporary gangs employed for casual work the contractor appropriates the whole of the wages, so that the coolie relies on what he can get as tips ?—Coolies have admitted to me that what they receive from passengers amounts to about Rs. 60 on the average per month.

M-2004. You suggest that coolies coming from India ought to be registered ; they come from Calcutta, Madras, the Coromandel Coast, China, and 10,000 come from the Straits ?—Yes ; labour does not come from the Straits.

M-2005. Then what are these 10,000 that come into Rangoon every year ?—They are Chinese traders and others.

M-2005-A. Coolies also come from the Arrakan Coast and Tavoy ; do you suggest that all these workers must be registered ?—No ; the Arrakan Coast and Tavoy are in Burma.

M-2006. So that they can come in without any registration ?—Yes.

M-2007. If a rice mill owner wants 100 coolies in the busy season, he has to go to somebody and say : In the month of February I want 100 coolies from Calcutta, Madras or the Coromandel Coast. Who will send them to the mill owner ?—I am suggesting what is actually done in the Federated Malaya States.

M-2008. *Maistries* and *kanganies* are sent from the Federated Malaya States. You are opposed to the use of *maistries* ; would it be all right to send a *kangan* ?—If you adopt the same safeguards as there are in the Federated Malaya States, then the baneful influence of the *maistry* would disappear.

M-2009. You say that only 60 per cent. of the Indian labour that comes from Calcutta, Madras and the Coromandel Coast stays in the vicinity of Rangoon, the rest going up-country ?—Yes.

M-2010. Then have the employers at Namtu and the oilfields got to recruit also ?—No ; the B. O. C. get their labour on their doorstep and it is the same in the case of Namtu ; the labour goes there voluntarily.

M-2011. So that you would let them go to Namtu and the oilfields, but you would not let them come to the rice mills of Rangoon ?—At Namtu and the oilfields of Yenangyaung they are free ; they are not under the same disabilities. I do not mind where they go, provided you remove the *maistry*, who is the cause of all the trouble.

M-2012. *Mr. Tait* : In your memorandum you say that 30,000 labourers are recruited in India, while *Mr. Bennison* says that 14,000 are employed at the rice mills, 6,000 by the Port Trust and 6,000 on shipping, which accounts for 26,000 ; is that more or less the allocation of the labourers ?—My figures are slightly different ; they total rather less than 30,000 ; I put down 30,000 as a round figure. I think there would be 16,000 employed at the rice mills.

M-2013. So that 100 per cent. of the rice mill labour, on your own statement, is recruited in India ?—No, I said recruited by *maistries*.

M-2014. You said 30,000 were recruited in India ?—I said they were recruited labour.

M-2015. *The Chairman* : 30,000 was the figure given in answer to me.—Since I made that statement, I stick to it.

M-2016. *Mr. Tait* : Of that 30,000 recruited in India do you agree that 14,000 or 16,000 are employed in the rice mills ?—Rice mill labour consists of permanent and casual.

M-2017. The permanent labour are Chittagonians ; I am asking about the casual labour ?—There is a certain amount of Tamil and Telugu labour employed throughout the year in the rice-mills.

M-2018. Later in your written statement you say that in rice mills a more or less small permanent labour force recruited through the agency of *maistries* is employed all the year round ; that in the busy season, November—May, a considerably larger body of men and women are recruited locally. These statements do not seem to tally ?—Rice mill labour is practically to a man recruited through the agency of *maistries* ; part is recruited as a permanent labour force and the balance is casual labour ; but both sections are recruited by the *maistries*.

M-2019. *Sir Alexander Murray* : In India or in Burma ?—Casual labour, that is temporary labour, is recruited primarily locally.

M-2020. *Mr. Tait* : You say that the unemployment is 5 per cent. Do you adhere to that ?—I said roughly about that.

M-2021. Why do you say in your memorandum that the extreme indifference and callousness of most managers of mills in the matter of proper housing and general well-being of their workers in time communicates itself to the medical officers ?—Medical officers have told me that they receive very little encouragement from the managers. In one of the mills the manager had not visited the lines once though he had been there for three years.

M-2022. Have you got that first hand ?—Yes, it is a statement made to me and to the National Council of Women.

M-2023. *Sir Alexander Murray* : You speak of only one manager but your statement refers to *most* managers of mills. Are you justified in generalizing like that ?—Except in the case of the Burmah Oil Company you will find that the housing conditions are deplorably bad in the case of the rice mills and other factories. It would not be the case if the managers were interested in labour and tried to keep the lines clean.

(The witness withdrew.)

**Mrs. G. MARTIN JONES, Mrs. FRASER, representatives of the National Council of Women, Burma.**

M-2024. *Mrs. Lucco* : Why is the death rate among the Indian Muhammadan women so high ?—(*Mrs. Jones*) : We are trying to investigate whether it is due to the kind of work that the women are employed in or to the kind of life they live at home and so on.

M-2025. Is it because these Indian women have no faith in western medicine that they do not avail themselves of the medical facilities afforded to them ?—(*Mrs. Fraser*) : It is more ignorance than anything else. When some educational work is done among them they are not so backward in accepting western medicine.

M-2026. But are there adequate medical facilities in the mills and factories ?—No, there is very little.

M-2027. *Mr. Clow* : Is their reluctance possibly due to an objection to go to male doctors ?—That is a great objection. But they object even when midwives are provided.

M-2028. *Mrs. Luce* : Is it true that these women do not get adequate medical attention in the dispensaries ?—(*Mrs. Jones*) : I have no personal experience of this, but I have heard one or two complaints.—(*Mrs. Fraser*) : I have been to one or two clinics and it seems to me that the women get reasonable treatment.

M-2029. Are advances made to the workers by the employers before their wages are due ?—I think advances are made, but no interest is charged.

M-2030. Is there any system of leave rules, sick and maternity benefit and so on for the women workers ?—(*Mrs. Jones*) : No. We heard that in one of the mills the women work right up to the day of confinement and go back to work two days after.

M-2031. What sort of welfare work is done by the Telephone Company for the telephone girls ?—They have a room in which they can rest. In the case of illness the welfare officer goes to where the girl lives and finds out whether she has proper medical attention or not.

M-2032. Do the children of the labouring classes make use of the Corporation playgrounds ?—Yes, they do.

M-2033. With regard to infectious diseases, how could there be any hiding of infectious cases if the doctor did his duty ?—(*Mrs. Fraser*) : I do not think the doctor will be allowed to go into the inner room which is shut off with matting. That would be the excuse. If we had a lady doctor it would help greatly. We must have lady doctors not merely for the sake of the women workers but also for the sake of the wives of male workers.

M-2034. Would it not be hard to ask small mills engaging 20 or 30 women to have a lady doctor ?—Perhaps it would be hard on the mills to ask them to do that. It would be better if the Corporation could send its health visitors to go round and see these women.

M-2035. Is there any welfare work done at any of these Mills ?—No.

M-2036. *Col. Russell* : Would it not be a great advantage if the Rangoon Corporation appointed a Lady Doctor to supervise the work of the health visitors appointed under the Corporation Welfare Scheme ?—Yes, it would be of advantage.

M-2037. With regard to maternity benefits would it not be difficult to work any maternity scheme because most of these women are only temporarily employed ?—(*Mrs. Jones*) : It is a great difficulty and we have not been able to solve it. The only thing we can do is to see that these women do not work for some time before and after confinement. It can be done in the case of casual labour also. We have also got reports of welfare schemes from Mills at Sholapur and Nagpur and the Committee are now studying them.

M-2038. If maternity benefits were made compulsory on the employers would they not get rid of the women workers ?—There would still be the wives of men workers.

M-2039. Would the employer be liable to pay maternity benefits to women who are not employed by him ?—The Corporation should undertake welfare schemes.

M-2040. The Corporation could only look after their health and so on during confinement ; they would not pay any allowance for lost wages which is implied in any maternity scheme undertaken by employers ?—We have not considered that question thoroughly.

M-2041. Have you considered the possibility of the women being discharged if maternity benefits were made compulsory, especially as the women are employed temporarily ?

*The Chairman* : Would not that be met by a provision similar to that in the Bombay Act that maternity benefit would be a legal liability on the employer only if the woman had worked for about nine months or so ?—I think that is a reasonable provision.

M-2042. *Col. Russell* : With regard to your recommendation to have a tuberculosis sanatorium would it not be the practicable thing to do to have one small sanatorium of 200 beds and a number of clinics for the treatment of early cases ?—I think it might be a satisfactory way to do it.

M-2043. You suggest that all houses should have back staircases. Is that to prevent filth and rubbish being thrown out through windows from top floors ?—(*Mrs. Fraser*) : Yes. There is no other way to dispose of them, and no respectable householder would bring the rubbish through his front rooms. Because there is no back staircase he has to throw it out of the back window. The National Council of Women made a report, I think in 1925, in which three alternative schemes were suggested. One was that there should be a chute from each floor, another was that the back drainage space should be eliminated and made into a sort of channel where everything could be swept down with water, and the third was that there should be a back staircase.

M-2044. Do you not think that it would be an advantage if dust bins were provided in the back drainage space ?—I think they would be full in a short time.

M-2045. It is a matter of the number of dust bins you have ?—I do not see how that would prevent the present practice of throwing rubbish out of the windows. I think there should be a back staircase.

M-2046. *Sir Alexander Murray* : During your visits to some of the houses did you find any room or houses empty waiting for people to occupy them ?—(*Mrs. Jones*) : It was only in the 39th street that we found several rooms empty because all the people had gone back to India.

M-2047. Ordinarily speaking there is no vacant accommodation anywhere ?—No.

M-2048. When people talk about the labour being migratory I gather that individuals are migratory, but the labour as a whole is greater than the accommodation that is available for it ?—Always.

M-2049. We found in the 36th street that for a small room Rs. 36 a month was being paid as rent. If one can expect such a high rent how is it that people do not build more workmen's houses ?—(*Mrs. Fraser*) : Because they do not see the necessity for it.

M-2050. *U Aye Maung* : Is it not a fact that Indian coolies like to stay only in certain streets which are near to the works where they are employed and that though there is vacant accommodation in other streets they would not go there ?—I think the coolies do tend to congregate in certain streets, but I do not think that there are so many houses to let that coolies might occupy. I should think not only is it the street that they would not occupy but probably the housing would not be suitable or the landlord would not let to *maistries*.

M-2051. *Sir Alexander Murray* : With regard to your suggestion for putting up a rest house, may I know how you could keep it clear when there is so much scarcity of accommodation ? Within a week or two of the building of the rest house it will be filled up and there will be no room for others to come in ?—(*Mrs. Jones*) : The rest house we suggest was the recommendation of the Social Service League. The rest house should be primarily for the labour that was going up-country : it is meant for those who stay in Rangoon for a short time and not meant for permanent labourers. There will be a restriction in the number of days that each labourer can stay.

M-2052. *Mr. Tyabji* : Has it been brought to your notice that in a large number of rice mills where they parboil rice, women are employed on the work of taking out paddy in a heated condition ?—No.

M-2053. *Mr. Ahmed* : Have you any Burmese and Indian women as members of your Council ?—Yes, we have.

M-2054. What will be their number ?—I cannot tell you that off-hand, but I should think that 15 per cent. would be Burmese and 25 per cent. would be Indians ; the rest would be Anglo-Indians and Europeans.

M-2055. Do employers give educational facilities for the children of their employes ?—Some employers have provided schools.

M-2056. Are there a number of Indian and Burmese girls who attend these schools ?—(*Mrs. Fraser*) : All those who attend are Burmese and Indian children.

M-2057. At what age do they go to the school and at what age do they go to work ?—They are not trained for work. They are just the children of the employes.

M-2058. Is there any restriction for their going to work ?—No.

M-2059. Do any of the factories here provide creches ?—No.

M-2060. What is the reason for the high infantile mortality in Burma ?—Bad feeding, bad housing and ignorance.

M-2061. *The Chairman* : With regard to the enforcement of the bye laws in these lodging houses with respect to the number of persons allowed, we are informed that the bye laws are not usually observed, that in many cases you may find 40 persons in a room which is licensed to hold 10 and that although there are a large number of prosecutions the overcrowding goes on just the same after the prosecution as before. Does that correspond with your experience ?—Yes, there is always overcrowding.

M-2062. Do you think that under the present circumstances it is possible strictly to enforce the bye laws ?—It is not possible. There is no alternative place where they can go to.

M-2063. When you have advocated strict enforcement of the bye laws you preceded that by additional provision made for the workmen ?—Yes.

M-2064. There is a jail in Rangoon, is there not, in close proximity to the crowded area ?—Yes.

M-2065. Have you ever been inside ?—Yes.

M-2066. Could you give me an idea as to the area covered by that jail, its grounds and its garden ?—I am sorry I cannot tell you how big that is.

M-2067. I understand that the accommodation to prisoners is between 1,400 and 1,500 ; and usually jail prisoners have much better accommodation as also much better food than the average population here in India as in other countries. Do you think that if that jail was removed 10 miles away from Rangoon that would be a site which could be suitably used for increasing the housing accommodation of the labour population ?—(*Mrs. Jones*) : The difficulty would be in getting the labour from there to the place where they work. I think that if a special train were to be run or if there was to be a bus service that difficulty could be got over.

M-2068. My impression was that it was not 400 yds. away from the place where they are sleeping out in the streets ?—(*Mrs. Fraser*) : It is more than that because it is outside what we call the city area.

M-2069. But it is not outside the municipal area ?—No. It is a fine site of course. (*Mrs. Jones*) : It is not far from the railway line.

M-2070. *Mr. Cliff* : What distance is it really from 24th, 26th and 36th streets ?—It is not far from 24th street.

M-2071. *The Chairman* : Am I correct that it is not more than 400 yds. from one of the places where labour at present resides in congested streets ?—Yes.

M-2072. Suppose we devote that area to housing do you think there is any difficulty in inducing some of these people to live there ?—(*Mrs. Fraser*) : I do not think so, but I think it would bring down the locality if you had cooly barracks there.

M-2073. You think that the labourers are worse than lepers ?—No

(The witnesses withdrew.)

## BURMA.

## Tenth Meeting.

## RANGOON.

Wednesday, 5th November 1930.

(MORNING.)

(At the Sule Pagoda Wharf.)

PRESENT :

The Rt. Hon'ble J. H. WHITLEY (*Chairman*).

SIR ALEXANDER MURRAY, KT., C.B.E.

Mr. A. G. CLOW, C.I.E., L.C.S.

Mr. KABIR-UD-DIN AHMED,  
Bar-at-Law.

Mr. JOHN CLIFF.

Lt.-Col. A. J. H. RUSSELL, C.B.E.,  
I.M.S. (*Medical Assessor*).

Mr. S. A. S. TYABJI.

U AYE MAUNG.

Mr. S. LALL, I.C.S.

A. DIBDIN.

} *Assistant Commissioners.*

} *Joint Secretaries.*

**Statement by G. GURU VALU, a wharf coolie.**

M-2074. I belong to Penti Sahib's gang. I come from Ganjam district; I have been here for three years; I have been to my country once during that time; I returned a year ago.

M-2075. When I first came to Rangoon I came of my own accord, paying my own way. I got the money to pay my fare; I took a loan of Rs. 20 from another man; I have not paid it back; I have not found it possible to pay back that debt because whatever I save I have been sending for the maintenance of my family.

M-2076. I have to pay interest on that advance at the rate of Rs. 1-2-0 per cent. per mensem. When I first came to Rangoon three years ago I got employment through countrymen of mine who are here.

M-2077. I am paid monthly, my wages being Rs. 37 a month. I work every day. The head *maistry* pays me my wages. There are no deductions out of the Rs. 37 a month.

M-2078. I live in 39th Street where I live with other men. The landlord is in another street. I am the tenant of the room in which I live; I pay Rs. 30 a month. There are 8 men in the room of whom I am one; we 8 men pay the rent equally; the room is in my name.

M-2079. I send home Rs. 10 or Rs. 15 every month; sometimes I miss a month. I never send more than Rs. 15 a month. It costs me Rs. 20 a month to live; food, clothing, *dhobi*, house rent and other miscellaneous expenses cost me Rs. 20 a month.

M-2080. On those occasions when I do not send money home I admit I have spent money on drink. I have no money with me now saved.

M-2081. I have a small debt in Rangoon ; it comes to Rs. 50. None of the people in my house join in a chit fund (saving fund).

M-2082. My wages are paid to me on the 6th or 7th of the month following the month in which they are earned. I do not take any advances. I make no payments to the gang *maistry* of any kind. There are 15 men working in my gang, including the *maistry*.

M-2083. I was here during the strike ; I was not on strike. After the strike I got an increase of wages of Rs. 2, all the monthly paid people got that increase.

M-2084. If everybody agrees to the Government closing all the liquor shops, I do not see why I should not agree. There are 15 men in my gang and they all take liquor. If to-morrow Government said that all the liquor shops were to be closed for ever, all the men in my gang would be pleased.

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**Statement by PENTI SAHIB, a gang *mistri*.**

M-2085. I belong to Vizagapatam district. I started here as a coolie ; I have been here 8 or 9 years ; I have been a *maistry* for 6 months ; soon after the earthquake I was made a *maistry*.

M-2086. I came first with my wife and family but my wife became ill and I had to send her back about a year ago. I have not been back to my country at all since I came here. My wife was here 7 years.

M-2087. When my wife and family were here I lived in Yogyaw Busti ; I and my wife and family had a room to ourselves.

M-2088. Some of the men in my gang are from Ganjan while others are from Godavari. When I first came to Rangoon I came of my own accord. I first got employment in Rangoon with the Rangoon Electric Tramways Company, Messrs. Dawood.

M-2089. A man who was working on the wharf here was living with me ; he brought me here and got me employment.

M-2090. When I was employed with Messrs. Dawood & Company I was only getting Rs. 16. I am paid by the month ; my wages are Rs. 43 a month.

M-2091. There are 14 coolies beside myself in my gang. I do not get any money from any of the men in my gang. I only get money when I am about to go home ; then each man contributes something, say Rs. 2 or Rs. 3, of their own free will. They do not contribute in that way when other members of the gang go home.

M-2092. We work from 6-30 A.M. to 6 P.M. About mid-day we go out to take tea and we are away for about half an hour. Sometimes we work nights ; we take it by turns : this month we work during the day while next month my gang will work in the night.

M-2093. If there is work on the steamers we work on Sundays. We do not get any extra pay for Sunday work.

M-2094. Since my wife went home I have taken a small room at Rs. 2 rent and I am living by myself. I live to the right of Circuit Road.

M-2095. Every month I send hom to my wife and family Rs. 20. I spend Rs. 20 a month on my food, clothes and housing in Rangoon.

M-2096. I do not spend money on liquor. I would like the Government to close the liquor shops in Rangoon.

M-2097. I have not much debt here in Rangoon ; it may be Rs. 10 or Rs. 20. I have no debt in my country. I have no land.

M-2098. My leg was burnt in No. 4 godown here. There was some caustic inside a package, but the outside label showed it as containing soda ; I lifted it and it broke and fell on my leg. That happened 5 years ago. For 3 months I could not work. At that time I was employed by another contractor. I went to the hospital where I stayed for 3 days ; then I left and was treated in my own house. I got my pay during the 3 months I was off work and then I came back to my old job.

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**Statement by NARAINI, a stevedore coolie.**

M-2099. I come from West Godavari District. I work for Singamma Rama Krishnama, the head *maistry* of Hari Krishna Pillai & Company. I work at the sling ; I have been at this job for about a year now. It is now a year and 2 months since I first came here.

M-2100. When I first came to Rangoon I took a loan and came of my own accord ; we could not get enough food at home, so we came here. People come and go and that is how I knew about work here. I took a loan of Rs. 40. I spent more than Rs. 25 coming across.

M-2101. When I landed in Rangoon I got into touch with the gang *maistry* here. For about a month after I came here I could not get any employment ; I had spent all my loan on food before I got work and had to borrow more.

M-2102. This is the only job I can get and so I must make the best of it. I had about 8 days' work about a month ago and then could not get any work at all ; we have only been working since yesterday.

M-2103. The Burmese labourers are sharing the work and that is why we sometimes cannot get work. If I work for a day I get Rs. 1-12-0.

M-2104. I pay money to the gang *maistry* ; I give one day's free service out of every ship. If I work for 8 days I am not paid for one of those days ; the *maistry* gets one of my day's pay ; that is the custom. The *maistry* takes one day's pay from every ship. There are 12 men in a gang.

M-2105. I paid off the Rs. 40 debt in about 6 months after coming here.

M-2106. I have a wife and family in India. I have no land. If I have any money after my expenses here, I send about Rs. 10 or Rs. 12 home to my wife and family.

M-2107. I have borrowed Rs. 40 here in Rangoon ; I took the loan from my gang *maistry*. The *maistry* does not take interest on that loan.

M-2108. When we work a ship the 12 men in the gang pay the *maistry* one day's pay, because if we do not pay that we shall not be called for work next time.

M-2109. After we have finished the work on the steamer we are working now, when the next steamer arrives we shall be paid for the work on this steamer. The *gang maistry* pays me my wages.

M-2110. I work two ships a month. We shall work on this steamer for about 12 days, and then after two or three days another steamer will arrive. I was paid last 5 or 6 days ago when I received Rs. 14.

M-2111. I was here at the time of the strike. Many people, of whom Mr. Narayana Rao was one, told us we could go on strike ; we were told that at a meeting. We could not fill our stomachs, we wanted more money and so we went on strike.

M-2112. I get less wages now than I got before the strike. We are working on this steamer ; the next steamer that arrives will be worked by the Burmans. The people who told us to come out on strike did not tell us that Burmese labour would be brought in in our places.

M-2113. I never take liquor.

M-2114. I cannot find a way of going back to my country. I send my wife and family Rs. 10 every month.

M-2115. I have been sick since I came here ; I was ill for about 15 days.

M-2116. I live with people from my country ; I pay Rs. 2 a month. My food, clothes, house rent and the money I send to my wife and family cost me Rs. 25 a month.

M-2117. When I do not get work on board the ships I pull handcarts.

M-2118. I find that my earnings are just enough for my needs ; my earnings amount to about Rs. 25 a month. It costs me Rs. 15 to live here and I send Rs. 10 a month home.

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**BURMA.**

Tenth Meeting.

RANGOON.

*Wednesday, 5th November 1930.*

(Afternoon.)

PRESENT :

Sir ALEXANDER MURRAY, K.T., C.B.E. (*Presiding*).

Mr. G. D. BIRLA.

Mr. JOHN CLIFF.

Lt.-Col. A. J. H. RUSSELL, C.B.E., I.M.S. (*Medical Assessor*).Mr. S. A. S. TYABJI, *Assistant Commissioner*.

Mr. S. LALL, I.C.S.

Mr. A. DIBDIN.

} *Joint Secretaries.*


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Mr. J. R. D. GLASCOTT, C.I.E., Agent, and Dr. P. C. HAYNE, Chief Medical Officer, representatives of the Burma Railways.

M-2119. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Mr. Glascott, what is your personal experience on Railways ?—I have been 32 years on Railways and 27 years in Burma, during which time I rose from Assistant Engineer to District Engineer, to Deputy Chief Engineer, then to Chief Engineer and Agent. I have been Agent now for ten years.

M-2120. Since 1st January 1930 you have become a State-managed Railway ?—Yes.

M-2121. You use the departmental and not the divisional system ?—We work departmentally. Ours is a long straggling line and does not lend itself to divisional management. The divisional system may be of advantage in the case of Railways like the East Indian Railway which have many big centres of trade like Cawnpore, Allahabad and Calcutta. But the nerve centre of Burma from the business point of view is Rangoon. If I had a divisional system and the divisional officer at Mandalay wanted to settle a question with the local representative of a firm at Mandalay, the local representative would say that he could do nothing without consulting the head office at Rangoon. In such cases it is much easier for me to settle questions direct with their Rangoon Office. As far as I know there is only one firm with headquarters outside Rangoon and that is Messrs. T. D. Findlay & Company of Moulmein.

M-2122. That is from the public point of view. How does the system work from the point of view of labour ?—I think it is the same from the labour point of view also.

M-2123. What proportion of your labour is Burmese and what proportion is Indian ?—I cannot give you any exact figures at the minute.

M-2124. From what part of India do you get your Indian labour ?—The men who are on my pay-roll mostly come from Northern India, United Provinces, Bengal and Madras. But the coolie labour of the contractors are mostly Oriyas.

M-2125. Are the employees of the Traffic Department mostly Burmese ?—When I joined the line they were predominantly Indian, but now they are largely Burmese. We have an order that preference should be given to Burmese and persons of Burmese domicile.

M-2126. Are the gangmen entirely Indian ?—Sometime back it was so, but now the Burmans are taking to it in Upper Burma.

M-2127. Do you recruit any Indian labourers from India ?—No, we do not recruit any labourers from India. They probably come here and work under contractors for some time and then they come to us instead of sticking to the contractors. That is how we get our pointsmen and gangmen, etc.

M-2128. Do you recruit any Burmese labourers ?—We do not recruit anybody.

M-2129. Out of your 29,000 odd workers you give us details only for 20,000 odd workers. Would you give us details for the remaining 9,000 ?—Yes, I shall send you details. I much regret the list is not complete.

M-2130. Does the figure include contractors' men also ?—No, only men on my pay roll.

M-2131. Would you also give us this additional information : (i) the number of employees drawing Rs. 20 and under ; (ii) the number of employees drawing Rs. 30 and under, including those drawing Rs. 20 and under ; and (iii) the rules regarding your Provident Fund ?—Yes, I shall send you the information.

M-2132. What kinds of work do you do through contractors ?—All new works such as painting and whitewashing, buildings, bridges and so on are done through contractors. Track maintenance work is done by our own men.

M-2133. Do you employ contractors to load and unload coal ?—This is done by a contractor. The contract is put up for auction every year.

M-2134. Who is your contractor ? Has he been the same all through ?—For about ten years or more the same contractor, Raja Dr. S. Ramanatha Reddiar, has been doing it for us.

M-2135. Do you call for tenders and accept the lowest tender ?—We accept the lowest tender provided the tenderer had all the facilities for doing the job.

M-2136. Does the same contractor handle the machinery and stores which you get from home ?—No. The stores and machinery are landed on the wharf and then put into waggons. We employ a different contractor by name V. Bulli Venkiah.

M-2137. What do you mean when you say that payments are made direct to the labour employed through contractors ?—Do you pay direct to the contractor's labour also ?—This memorandum was not written by me. I think, perhaps in your original questionnaire there was a question whether we paid our maintenance labour through contractors. This is

not the case. We pay direct to labour on our pay roll. There is a pay clerk and an officer in charge who go in a pay train and pay the labour direct. As regards contractors we measure the work done by them and give them a cheque for the amount. We have nothing to do with paying their labour at all. Only in cases of big works like the construction of the Irrawaddy bridge do we give them certain medical facilities. On smaller works we supervise their camps.

M-2138. Why is it that the average duration of employment of labourers in the engineering department is only 10 years ?—It is really not so short as that. For instance, a gangman works here for 5 or 6 years and then goes across to India. After some time he comes back, joins up again in a different district and very often registers himself under a different name. We cannot keep an accurate record of the service of such persons. If a man worked on the Railway for ten years, went home and returned under a different name and worked for another 10 years, we would only count him as having been with us for ten years.

M-2139. Under your departmental system of working, what powers have the district officers in regard to leave, discharge or dismissal of their employees ?—They have practically no powers.

M-2140. If there was some trouble in the Engineering Department, who would discharge or dismiss the men concerned ?—The immediate superior officer.

M-2141. Does the Permanent Way Inspector control the leave and increment of his employees ?—He can grant or refuse leave to gangmen.

M-2142. What about the other staff ?—The only other staff in the Engineering Department are upper subordinates, works inspectors, etc., and the clerical staff.

M-2143. If a gangman is dismissed by the Permanent Way Inspector has he any right of appeal ?—Yes, he has.

M-2144. Who discharges or dismisses men in the loco. and carriage shops ?—The foreman of the shop will make a recommendation to the Works Manager and it is left to him to dismiss the man or not. The man who is dismissed can first of all appeal to the Loco. Superintendent and if he is not satisfied he can then appeal direct to me. Before he appeals to me he must have once appealed to his Departmental Officer.

M-2145. Would you let us have a statement with regard to the number of appeals which has come to you from each department, showing in how many cases you have confirmed or reversed the orders of the District Officers ?—Yes, I shall let you have that if I can, but it is usual, when a man appeals and I reverse the orders, to expunge the whole proceedings from his records. I may not be able to give you the number of cases in which I have reversed orders.

M-2146. What does your Personnel Officer in the traffic department do ?—He is not a welfare officer, but he has everything to do with the personnel of the department. We have got station masters all over the line. Roughly, we have 400 stations to attend to, at which we have at least 400 station masters and some 1,000 assistant station masters. We do not want to do any man any injustice. If there is any vacancy the Personnel Officer goes through the service sheets of all the employees to see who is the next senior for promotion. Similarly if there is any

complaint against a man the complaint goes to the Personnel Officer before it is sent to the Traffic Manager for judgment.

M-2147. When you have found it advisable to have a Personnel Officer in the traffic department how is it that you have not thought it necessary to have a similar officer in other departments?—Because we have not got the same number to deal with.

M-2148. Since when have you had this officer?—Since 2 years. Of course, he is doing other work besides attending to promotions, appeals, etc., and that is the justification for keeping him.

M-2149. *Mr. Cliff* : Does he deal with disciplinary cases?—It starts with the district officer and comes to the Personnel Officer who puts up the service sheet and the record of the man before the Traffic Manager.

M-2150. *Sir Alexander Murray* : You have a service agreement, have you not?—Yes.

M-2151. *Mr. Cliff* : Can we take it that, generally speaking, the men scheduled in statement A of your memorandum are on monthly pay and there are service agreements for them?—Yes.

M-2152. Can we also take it that all those who are mentioned in statements B and C of your memorandum have not signed any agreement?—So far as the men in statement C are concerned I do not think they have any service agreements. But in the case of some who find a place in statement B service agreements are taken.

M-2153. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Will you please send us a note as to the classes of employees who sign service agreements?—Yes.

M-2154. *Mr. Cliff* : Can you tell us what roughly is the difference between the wage standards in Burma and the wage standards in India?—I cannot give you any figures, but I know that we are paying higher than, for instance, the Bengal North-Western Railway and the Railways in Southern India.

M-2155. Does it mean that you have decided it on any principle?—No, except that the average standard of pay in Burma has been decided.

M-2156. You cannot say roughly what is the additional pay that is paid in Burma compared with the pay given on Indian railways?—I am afraid I cannot.

M-2157. Have you made any comparison?—I have never had to make any comparison because I have never been short of applicants. I am flooded with applications from people in Burma for appointments.

M-2158. With reference to your remark that a very high percentage of men require leave in India for fairly long periods, may I ask what is the period of leave that they take?—As I said at the beginning, they come over here without their wives and they may stay here 3 or 4 years. Then they want to go home for probably a whole year.

M-2159. Suppose a man is a station master or a booking clerk, is he granted leave?—Yes, but what I said does not apply to them because they generally live here with their wives. The remark applies more particularly to the permanent way staff, Indian firemen and so forth.

M-2160. Would you give a driver the recognized leave ?—Yes, if we could spare him. We cannot give them a year's leave all at once whenever asked for. If we did that half of our drivers might want to go on leave.

M-2161. Would you give a driver 4 months leave at a time ?—Yes.

M-2162. Is that taken advantage of ?—They prefer to stay for a longer time and take more leave. We sometimes meet them in one way and sometimes in the other.

M-2163. When a driver comes back does he resume his place in the service where he left off ?—Yes, if he has taken leave with our permission. If he does not return for a year even though we want him earlier he has got to leave the service altogether. We cannot let him have leave at his own sweet will.

M-2164. With regard to your statement on annual leave, can you tell us who are the men who will get four months' leave on full pay at a time ?—That applies to all men who have signed the service agreement and who are on monthly pay.

M-2165. You say that many of the Indian menial staff keep their families in India mainly due to the cost of the sea passage and living expenses in Burma being comparatively high. Can that be taken to mean that the wage paid to the menial staff is not sufficient to allow them to bring their families here ?—No, I do not think so at all ; far from that. The post-office people will tell you that more money is being sent by money orders every month from Insein and Myitnge than from any other place in Burma. You should know that most of them own land in India and that is the very reason why they leave their families in India.

M-2166. Can the men who are employed in the engineering department keep their wives and family here in Burma on the wages that they get here ?—In the first place, they have no wish to bring them here ; and secondly in the case of gangmen they have got a gang house with 12 members or so and as such they cannot bring their families.

M-2167. With regard to your statement on housing, may I enquire whether you are unreasonable or the Railway Board is unreasonable ?—Our funds are short. I can only build houses up to the amount of money that the Railway Board let me have. The Railway Board do not want to invest money on houses which do not fetch at least 4 per cent. return.

M-2168. Would you say that your houses give  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. ?—The houses for my superior staff bring back a return of 4 but those for the subordinate staff do not bring back 4.

M-2169. How much would it bring ?—About 3. I may say that the Railway Board told us that we were giving too good quarters. I also have from the Railway Board the cubic feet air space that have been asked for by unions in India. Our quarters are below what the unions ask for.

M-2170. *Sir Alexander Murray* : You have put down 20 lakhs as the contemplated expenditure on staff quarters during the next 2 years. Will you tell us how much of that you have already spent ?—I spent each year the amount allotted for that year.

M-2171. So you are spending money on quarters ?—Yes ; but the trouble is to get more.

M-2172. *Mr. Cliff* : You say : “ Contracts provide that contractors must adhere to the orders issued by the Medical Department with regard to housing and sanitation of their workmen ”. Can you explain the operation of that clause ?—(*Dr. Hayne*) : For instance, in camps the latrines that the contractors put up have to be passed first by the District Medical Officer of the district.

M-2173. What about the provision for water ?—The contractor is responsible.

M-2174. Has he got a schedule of instructions ?—Yes.

M-2175. Can you send to the Commission a copy of the schedule of instructions with regard to the housing and sanitation of workmen ?—So long as the contractor conforms to our sanitary requirements it is all right. They vary according to whether the country is a hill country or a flat country.

M-2176. Suppose you have 100 men working. What do you require in the way of housing ?—They have long bamboo huts in which they all live. But the latrines have to be built far away so that they cannot drain into the water supply ; and they have to make arrangements for shifting them every month.

M-2177. Do I understand that you put sub-assistant surgeons on camps of that character ?—In some we do, in some we do not. On large works we always do.

M-2178. *Sir Alexander Murray* : I take it that the construction of the Sagaing bridge is one of the large works ?—Yes.

M-2179. Will you please send us a copy of the contract that you entered into with the contractor at Sagaing ?—(*Mr. Glascott*) : Yes.

M-2180. Will you also send us a copy of the schedule of instructions that you gave to your medical officers there with regard to water supply, housing and latrine requirements of the contractors' establishment ?—(*Dr. Hayne*) : I did not give any special instructions with regard to that.

M-2181. *Col. Russell* : Does the District Medical Officer get any orders from the Chief Medical Officer ?—The District Medical Officer is a capable man and he ought to be able to do those things himself.

M-2182. You leave it entirely to the District Medical Officer ?—I go and inspect the work.

M-2183. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Will you please send us a note on the sort of instructions you would give if you were a District Medical Officer with regard to medical and sanitary matters both in a hill country and in a flat country ?—Yes.

M-2184. *Mr. Cliff* : You have got sub-assistant surgeons on large works. Have you got dispensaries ?—Yes.

M-2185. Would they have any record with regard to the health of the workpeople of the contractor ?—They are not directly under me but are under the District Medical Officer who is deputed to look after that particular construction. Statistics are not as a rule maintained for contractor's men.

M-2186. He is a Government officer, altogether apart from your regular medical officers ?—Yes. We used to get a District Medical Officer for construction from home who was a man on good pay and of very sound experience.

M-2187. Have you brought one for Sagaing construction ?—(*Mr. Glascott*) : We have not got any special man because the District Medical Officer of Mandalay attends to the work and we give him an extra allowance for this purpose.

M-2188. *Col. Russell* : On works of that kind you post sub-assistant surgeons who are really subordinate medical officers having no particular knowledge of public health work ?—(*Dr. Hayne*) : They are chosen for their knowledge of public health work and they work under the direct supervision of the District Medical Officer.

M-2189. You recruit them in Burma ?—Yes.

M-2190. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Could you please give us a copy of the instructions that the medical officers at Sagaing issued with regard to housing, water supply, sanitary arrangements, prevention of disease and so forth ?—Yes.

M-2191. *Mr. Cliff* : Can you tell me approximately the number of employees, other than European and Anglo-Indian, who are members of your Institutes ?—(*Mr. Glascott*) : I cannot say off-hand.

M-2192. Do they take advantage of these Institutes ?—Yes. As an example I may say that I have a football team in which there are Chinamen, Indians, Burmese and others.

M-2193. You say : “ There is no safety-first propaganda as the large mixture of races renders any form of pamphlets an almost impossible proposition ”. Is your Railway very different from any Railway in India ?—I am perfectly certain that I have more castes and creeds and nationalities to deal with than any one in India.

M-2194. Is not the bulk of your labour Indian ?—Yes, of the cooly brand, but amongst drivers, firemen, guards, brakesmen and clerks I have got every caste and creed.

M-2195. A good deal of safety-first propaganda which is being done is done in workshops ?—That is done by demonstration and not by issuing pamphlets. If I were to issue pamphlets I should have to get them printed in 3 or 4 Indian languages, and Chinese, Karen and so forth.

M-2196. About hours, you say that the principle adopted in the Traffic Department is that if the work is classified as “ continuous ” the men work in three shifts with one day off in a week ; but you say that the weekly hours of duty amount to 56 hours : how is that ?—This was a clerical error for 56, please read 48.

M-2197. They work 6 days a week ?—Yes.

M-2198. You say that there is a large number of staff who have not been brought within the scope of the Conventions owing to shortage of quarters through lack of funds and to the shortage of trained staff. Are these men likely to be brought in within any reasonable period ?—It depends entirely on what money the Railway Board will give me to build quarters. I am trying to push it. But I may tell you the staff do not

want it. They want 8 hours' work, *plus* 4 hours' overtime, 8 hours' off, come down again for a full day's work *plus* 4 hours' overtime and then off for 24 hours. It suits them perfectly. It does not suit them to work 8 hours and then go off and incidentally lose overtime pay.

M-2199. *Sir Alexander Murray* : You have increased the staff in 1929 as compared with 1928 : to what extent have you given effect to the recommendations of the Washington and Geneva Conventions ?—We have started on the Lashio branch and constructed a new shed and staff quarters on a large scale at Manpwe in order to meet it. Apart from that, we have put on a lot of extra assistant station masters all over the line. That was to give these men one day off per week. Normally, station masters are on day duty, and assistant station masters on night duty, all the time. We have put in relievers so that they may have some relief. Our mileage is just over 2,000.

M-2200. *Mr. Birla* : Do not your remarks on the origin of labour and methods of recruitment go to show that while there are plenty of Indians seeking employment, you always find it difficult to get Burmans to take up jobs, although it appears to be your policy to encourage more Burmans in preference to Indians ?—Our policy is to employ Burmans or domiciled Burmans, that is to say Indians who have domiciled under the Domicile Rules, or Anglo-Indians who are statutory natives ; if they are domiciled in Burma, we consider them to be Burmans, and we try to recruit Burmans. The Burman is ready for clerical work, though he is now coming on for manual work also in Upper Burma.

M-2201. For other kinds of work, do you have less difficulty in getting Burmans ?—For station masters, assistant station masters and jobs like that, I am taking on nobody else but Burmans, that is people domiciled in Burma.

M-2202. Is the Burmans' dislike of manual work due to their better economic condition, or is it due to their easy-going habits ?—I cannot explain why it is so. If you go into the forests, you will see a couple of Burmans with hand-saws sawing up sleepers, with sweat simply pouring off their bodies. Yet, they dislike doing earthwork.

M-2203. Are the Burmans as efficient as Indians ?—In clerical work they are just as good as Indians, but out on the permanent way they have not had experience and they are not as good as Indians, but in time there is no reason why they should not be as good as Indians.

M-2204. In order to encourage more Burmans to take up such jobs, would you suggest putting some sort of check on the immigration of Indian labour into Burma ?—I should not put any check on any immigration.

M-2205. If the policy of the Railways and other employers is to give encouragement to Burmans, and if you do not put any check on the immigration of Indian labour to Burma, do you not think it will cause an oversupply of Indian labour and consequent unemployment and great distress among them in future ?—But the immigration is mainly of coolies. When we have a big construction or anything like that, it is quite impossible to do it with Burman labour as there is not enough of it. In our memorandum we are talking of recruitment for permanent staff.

M-2206. Does it mean that for a very long period to come, Burma will have to depend on imported labour ?—Yes, for many years to come ; there is no question about it. I would not therefore put any check. If the Burman has got to make good, he has got to make good by efficiency.

M-2207. You say that the standard of wages on your Railways is comparatively higher than that on Indian Railways, but at the same time the cost of living too is higher in Burma than what it is in India. Then there is no special attraction on the Burma Railways as compared with Indian Railways ?—Excepting that they are getting more pay.

M-2208. But if the cost of living is higher ?—I do not say that the cost of living is so much higher that it does not pay to come over here. It does pay ; otherwise why do they come ? They do not come because they love Burma, but because they can make more money.

M-2209. From your statement it appears that you pay your gang coolies Rs. 15 to Rs. 17 ; you pay the gate-keepers Rs. 8 to Rs. 12 ?—The gate-keepers are pension jobs.

M-2210. You pay the durwans Rs. 16 to Rs. 20. Do you think that these rates are higher than what we have in India ?—Then why do they come, why do they stay ?

M-2211. Probably they do not get employment in India, and therefore they are compelled to go elsewhere ?—Why do they not go to some other employment instead of coming to me ?

M-2212. How do you prove that you are paying higher wages as compared with the Railways in India ?—I could not give a direct answer to it, but I am quite certain that we are paying higher than the South Indian Railway and the B. and N. W. Railway. The statement in the memorandum is not comprehensive enough. If you look at the establishment register, you will see that the cooly gets higher than is shown in the memorandum.

M-2213. You have given the number of cases of accidents during the past five years : why do you not mention the amounts that have been paid as compensation ?—There is the Workmen's Compensation Act, and when we were a company we had the Company's rules for compensation, and I pay whichever is higher. If you would like to have the figures, I could get them for you.

M-2214. Why have you not made any remarks about the question of sickness insurance ?—We have no such thing.

M-2215. Do you mean to say that you do not approve of the scheme ?—I can only put in force what the Government allow me to put in force.

M-2216. *Col. Russell* : Regarding the statement you have given on the question of the nature of accommodation provided in each class, could we have copies of plans of Nos. 61 and 62 types of quarters ?—I hand them in.

M-2217. Have these Nos. 61 and 62 been approved by the Medical Department ?—(*Dr. Hayne*) Yes.

M-2218. What is the cost per room of No. 61 type ?—(*Mr. Glascott*) 61, single unit costs Rs. 706, and additional units cost Rs. 494 each.

M-2219. That means that if you lined them in barracks, the cost is Rs. 494 ?—You start off with Rs. 706 for the first unit ; for additional units, if they are built in a long row, it is Rs. 494 each.

M-2220. Is that the ordinary method of building quarters of that type ?—Yes, as a rule.

M-2221. I take it that this type 61 is for the lowest grade of workmen ?—Up to Rs. 40 they get type 61. In our statement it is given as up to 30, but actually it goes up to Rs. 40.

M-2222. Are you satisfied that type 61 gives sufficient accommodation for a man, his wife and children ?—No. They are not built for men with families.

M-2223. How many men do you put in these quarters ?—One man in one unit.

M-2224. That is a room ?—Yes, but they do not have their wives.

M-2225. You give a single room to a single individual ?—Yes.

M-2226. You do not double up ?—We are supposed not to. Type 61 when built, say, as a gang hut, is really one long dormitory the intermediate walls being left out. I will not say that there would be 6 men in 6 units ; there may be 8 ; they prefer the intermedial walls being omitted.

M-2227. Do you build in that fashion for the staff that you employ in Rangoon ?—No. That was for gang huts on the line. In Rangoon we have intermediate walls. The reason for the long dormitory without intermediate walls is that the gang men feel a little safer if they are all together in case they are raided.

M-2228. How many District Medical Officers have you got for your 29,000 odd workers on the Railway ?—(Dr. Hayne) We should have 4 ; at the present moment we have got only 3.

M-2229. Where are they stationed ?—At Mandalay, Insein, Toungoo. and one is on leave.

M-2230. Is there a District Medical Officer in Rangoon ?—No ; he is in Insein. I do all the work in Rangoon.

M-2231. How do you divide the 26 dispensaries and 2 hospitals that you mention ? Where are the 2 hospitals ?—At Myitnge and Insein.

M-2232. What about Rangoon itself ?—There is the General Hospital.

M-2233. Do you depend on the General Hospital ?—Yes.

M-2234. Do you find any difficulty in getting Railway workers admitted to the General Hospital ?—No. We simply write a letter, and they are admitted.

M-2235. Does that mean that the railway workers are given any preference ?—I do not think so. The letter goes to the Superintendent of the Hospital.

M-2236. Do you think that one General Hospital with 560 beds is sufficient hospital accommodation for a city with the population of Rangoon including Railway workers ?—(Mr. Glascott) Certainly not. It is the hospital for the whole Province, not for Rangoon alone.

M-2237. Are there any other hospitals ?—(*Dr. Hayne*) No. There is a women's hospital and a contagious diseases hospital, but there is only one general hospital.

M-2238. You do not think it is necessary that the Railway should have a hospital of its own in Rangoon ?—I do not think so.

M-2239. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Does the Railway pay a special donation to the General Hospital ?—They pay Rs. 1,000 a month.

M-2240. *Col. Russell* : In Rangoon itself, how many dispensaries have you got ?—In Rangoon proper we have only one ; but there is another dispensary at Mahlwagon, which is only 1½ miles off.

M-2241. What is the total Railway population in Rangoon ?—It is somewhere about a thousand or twelve hundred.

M-2242. You have no railway workshop here ?—No.

M-2243. Would the workers in Insein exceed a thousand ?—In Insein itself there will be more than a thousand.

M-2244. How many beds have you got in the Insein hospital ?—20.

M-2245. How many beds are there in the other hospital at Myitnge ?—There are 12 official beds, but we can make many more ; it is a very nice hospital, and there is plenty of room.

M-2246. In addition to your District Medical Officers, what other medical staff do you employ ?—An assistant surgeon at Myitnge, an assistant surgeon in Rangoon, and in the districts at each dispensary there is a sub-assistant surgeon.

M-2247. How many sub-assistant surgeons are there ?—(*Mr. Glascott*) The number of sub-assistant surgeons employed during 1929-30 was 31.

You have a sub-assistant surgeon at each dispensary ?—(*Dr. Hayne*) Yes.

M-2248. Does he travel up and down the line as well ?—Yes, in the small dispensaries. In the headquarter dispensaries they have only short distances to run. I do not like them to have more than just about a station on each side of their headquarters, as I do not like them to be out of headquarters long during the night.

M-2249. Have you and your District Medical Officers got any public health qualifications ?—Yes, the D. P. H. There is one going home this year who is going up for it ; the others have all already got it.

M-2250. Are they all permitted private practice ?—Yes.

M-2251. *Sir Alexander Murray* : They are not whole-time officers ?—(*Mr. Glascott*) They are allowed to take private practice.

M-2252. *Col. Russell* : When you are sending in a list of your medical staff and distribution, would you add to it the number of sanitary inspectors you employ and say where they are ?—(*Dr. Hayne*) It will be in the annual report. (*Mr. Glascott*) On parts of the line that are a long way from our District Medical Headquarters, we subsidize the local Government Medical Officer. There is no part of our line which is not within 20 miles of a dispensary and a sub-assistant surgeon.

M-2253. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Have you had any complaints from your workers about lack of proper medical attendance ?—(*Dr. Hayne*) No.

M-2254. *Col. Russell* : Are the usual sanitary arrangements made in the workshops in the way of latrines, etc., for instance, do you have them in the workshop at Insein ?—We have septic tank latrines there.

M-2255. In these workshops do you have water supply laid on into the shop ?—Yes.

M-2256. Are you satisfied that in the hot weather for instance the men are able to get a sufficient supply of cold water ?—Yes.

M-2257. You distribute it by pipes ?—(*Mr. Glasscott*) There is a big overhead tank and service tanks inside the shops, and if they want a drink, it comes from the service tanks.

M-2258. In the hot weather, the water will be hot ?—(*Dr. Hayne*) There have never been any complaints about it.

M-2259. Are you satisfied that the water arrangements are satisfactory ?—Yes.

M-2260. Are bathing places provided in the workshops, where the men can conveniently wash themselves ?—(*Mr. Glasscott*) We have not got special bathing places but in the workmen's lines we have got these stand-pipes put up at a height. They stand under these and wash themselves.

M-2261. *Sir Alexander Murray* : You say that the Factories Act does not apply to your workshops : is that so ?—No. The Factories Act very much applies to Railway Shops and we are expected to set an example to privately owned shops. The answer in the memorandum is a reply to a question about precautions with regard to humidity in cotton factories.

M-2262. *Col. Russell* : What is your experience of the sanitary committees that you mention in paragraph (27) ?—(*Dr. Hayne*) They are very useful, because one gets the engineering man there on the spot. You can show him what requires to be done and ask him to do it. The departments work together, and get work done at once without referring to the head office.

M-2263. They only meet quarterly ?—Yes, that is about it.

M-2264. Is that enough ?—Yes.

M-2265. Do the senior subordinates who are members of the sanitary committees take any interest in the matter between the quarterly visits of the senior officers ?—(*Dr. Hayne*) Yes, some of them certainly do, and the better type of man takes a considerable interest in it.

M-2266. So that you are satisfied they serve a useful purpose ?—Yes, I am sure they do.

M-2267. I take it malaria is one of your most troublesome problems ?—Yes, it is.

M-2268. Have you a list of what are known as unhealthy stations ?—(*Mr. Glasscott*) I have a list in the office of the places in which we pay unhealthy allowance.

M-2269. Will you include in your note a statement of the number of unhealthy stations you have got ?—Yes, I will send it in.

M-2270. Do you restrict the period for which staffs are posted to these stations ?—Yes ; they are not supposed to be at an unhealthy station more than 2 years at the outside, and if they get sick they are moved. In fact, they never spend two years at an unhealthy station ; as soon as they look like getting sick they are transferred.

M-2271. *Sir Alexander Murray* : When they are at an unhealthy station they get an allowance in addition to their pay, do they not ?—(*Dr. Hayne*) Yes. The trouble is that the system tends to have the effect of making the whole of the staff sickly because they all have to go to unhealthy stations in turn. Certain men like going to these unhealthy stations, for the advantage of drawing the extra pay.

M-2272. *Col. Russell* : Do you transfer these happy individuals ?—They are transferred normally, but it is a pity. (*Mr. Glascott*) If they want to remain at an unhealthy station we leave them there, but they must get transferred in time because of promotion.

M-2273. Have you any definite anti-malarial work ?—(*Dr. Hayne*) We are just doing some now.

M-2274. Who is doing it ?—Dr. Carrier in Mandalay.

M-2275. Is he one of your District Medical Officers ?—Yes.

M-2276. Has he had any special training in that work ?—He goes out with the Government health officer to learn about it.

M-2277. You have no malariologist ?—There is very little to learn about it ; they are simply spraying.

M-2278. I was wondering whether you had worked out a definite anti-malarial scheme on the advice of a skilled malariologist ?—We are trying it at Shwenyaune at the end of the Southern Shan States Railway, which is badly infected with malaria. Our medical department, in conjunction with the Director of Public Health, have been there ; the Director of Public Health has suggested various anti-malarial measures ; we have agreed to come in with anything they do, provided the people on either side within a quarter of a mile will do the same. A railway line is only a strip, and it is no good my disinfecting all the borrow pits if the adjoining land is in a bad state.

M-2279. You have not recommended to your Board any definite anti-malarial organization ?—(*Mr. Glascott*) We have cut back jungle which has improved conditions beyond recognition. Shwenyaune is like Venice ; it is a net-work of canals.

M-2280. You say that bazaar wagons carry stores over those parts of the Railway where there are no other facilities ; at what prices do you sell those stores ?—We used to sell them at cost price, Rangoon. We had to put up the prices because we were accused of competing with private enterprise, so we now add the freight at railway rates.

M-2281. Why do your medical staff take more leave than any other department ?—(*Dr. Hayne*) I should say they do not. I do not understand the figures on this point which appear in our memorandum. (*Mr. Glascott*) The officers of all departments take their leave when they can get it, but there is a huge engineering staff which come out for 4 or 5 years and then leave the service.

M-2282. *Col. Russell* : A table in the memorandum of the Railway Board shows that the percentage of medical certificates issued on the Burma Railways is higher than on any other railway in India ; can you explain that ?—(*Dr. Hayne*) I suppose that Mu Valley accounts for most of it. When a man has three months' leave and goes back to his home in India, at the end of that leave he very often sends in a medical certificate and applies for further leave. Three months' leave is not long enough for them.

M-2283. Do you accept medical certificates from private practitioners ?—I have got to when the men are on leave in India and then it has to be countersigned by a Civil Surgeon. I do not in Rangoon because then they can come to me. The man can go to his own doctor if he likes, but he has also got to show himself to me.

M-2284. Supposing he is suffering from pneumonia ?—That is a different thing ; in that case we should go and see him.

M-2285. Would a man suffering from a serious disease like that send for you ?—His department let us know he is ill and then we go and see him in the house where he is.

M-2286. Do you have any difficulty with regard to the medical certificates of these general practitioners ?—No, none at all.

M-2287. *Sir Alexander Murray* : With regard to that table of figures, will you let us have a note amplifying your explanation with regard to medical certificates.

M-2288. *Mr. Tyabji* : Would it not be better to abolish medical certificates ?—(*Mr. Glascott*) No, I must have a medical certificate if a man says he is ill.

M-2289. But ought not a man to be given his leave merely because he is tired of work ?—He should ask for it in the normal way and not say he is sick when he is not. No man in Government service can claim leave as a right.

M-2290. It is a considerable expense to a man who is not earning much to go to a private practitioner to get a medical certificate ?—Yes, but he can go to our railway practitioner free of charge.

M-2291. I am speaking not only of Rangoon but of places all over Burma ?—In most places there is a Government doctor or a Railway doctor. We object to his going to, say, a place like Mandalay and getting a medical certificate when he in fact lives at some place miles away from Mandalay.

M-2292. You have a very large temporary staff ?—This memorandum was written a year ago when we were doing a lot of construction ; now that construction is finished and the staff employed on that temporary work has gone.

M-2293. Do you have temporary staffs in workshops like Myitnge and Insein ?—No ; there is the normal amount that we require to work the shops.

M-2294. Are not there temporary people working for you in some cases for 9 and 10 years who are kept on a daily wage ?—No. Some people are on a monthly pay while others are on daily pay ; it is not a question of their being temporary. No man is permanent ; if the work comes to

an end any man has to go whether he is on the permanent staff or what you call the temporary staff.

M-2295. You have a temporary staff and a permanent staff in the shops ?—No ; when we have a big press of work we take on extra men.

M-2296. At Myitnge have you not temporary blacksmiths and carpenters ?—When we have a rush of work, yes.

M-2297. Men work for 9 or 10 years and are classed as temporary ?—No. There are no permanent men in the shops at all except the covenanted staff, and they are only permanent to the extent of their agreement. None of us are permanent.

M-2298. You have labourers working for 12 annas a day ?—Yes, about that.

M-2299. If a man works for you for 9 or 10 years you do not increase his pay ?—Not if he is a coolie.

M-2300. Have you ever worked out the cost of living ?—Yes, several times.

M-2301. With what result ?—The result I have come to is that the cost of living in Rangoon is extremely high ; I have made representations to get an extra Rangoon allowance ; we have a small one but it is not enough.

M-2302. In the case of small accidents your workmen are not paid if they are ill for less than 10 days ?—It depends on the case absolutely. If they do not come under the Workmen's Compensation Act, that is not my fault. I apply the Workmen's Compensation Rules or our old Company's rules, whichever is the more generous.

M-2303. Why do you say in paragraph 28 of your memorandum that the Factories and Mines Acts and Rules do not apply to railway workshops ?—Because we have no such factories as cotton factories, and so it does not apply to us.

M-2304. Are the *khalasis* on board the ships classed as skilled labour ?—I would not care to answer off-hand but I should think so.

M-2305. Why do you divide them into three classes ?—I wish you had given me notice of that question ; I cannot answer it off-hand.

*Mr. Tyabji* : Possibly we might have that information ?

*Sir Alexander Murray* : Yes.

M-2306. *Mr. Tyabji* : Are not the unhealthy stations used as punishment stations ?—Never.

M-2307. With regard to the strike of 1921 you say one of the demands was for an increase of pay of Rs. 10. Is not that a mistake ?—I think they asked for more than that ; it was 9 years ago but if I recollect rightly they demanded a 50 per cent. all round increase.

M-2308. The men demanded that the colour bar should be abolished ?—There is no colour bar.

M-2309. I am stating the demands which the men put forward ?—Yes, but that is not true.

M-2310. They said that Mr. Craig had the discretion to pay Rs. 10 for the best workmen, but as a rule he reserved this for Anglo-Indians. You speak of an illiterate anonymous letter, but formal demands were made ?—Normally speaking no one at the head of a big administration can take any notice of an anonymous letter. As a matter of fact, I became Agent in 1919 ; I was on leave in 1920 ; I was out when this thing came. I think Mr. Patel was the spokesman for these people. These are the demands of the Rangoon station and you have unfortunately mixed it up with Insein workshop.

M-2311. Yes, I have.—That is the difference.

M-2312. In 1928 there was a case of a lathe falling and killing a man ; the lathe fell down because the ground caved in ?—I have no recollection of it and I cannot conceive how the ground could cave in under a lathe because you could not have a lathe working unless you had a concrete foundation. If that happened, the Factory Inspector would soon make enquiries.

M-2313. He did make enquiries.—I have no recollection of it.

M-2314. *Sir Alexander Murray* : How long must a man overstay his leave before you feel justified in dismissing him ?—As a rule we do not dismiss them if they write and ask to go on leave without pay. Each case has to be dealt with on its merits. If a man writes and makes out a case that he wants another couple of months or something like that, we pass it if we possibly can.

M-2315. You have no standing rule ?—No.

M-2316. Do you discharge many men in the course of a year ?—We have to at times.

M-2317. What is the usual ground for dismissal ?—It is generally something against the public safety : a bad case of a driver running against signals, a permanent way inspector neglecting to make the inspections he should have made. We do not dismiss if we can possibly avoid it.

M-2318. You have instituted a system of good conduct marks ?—Yes. I have very little fining now ; the only department in which we are compelled to maintain fines is the loco. department where, if a man through carelessness spoils a job, it may entail a heavy loss ; we are bound to fine a man for a thing like that.

M-2319. Good conduct marks do not apply in that particular case ?—It cannot.

M-2320. You have a piece-rate system in the shops ?—Yes.

M-2321. How do you work it ?—We were on daily wages and then we introduced piece-work. It is very difficult to price the piece-work ; we put a gang on to a certain job ; they used to turn out, we will say, four of these in a day ; we said we would give them 20 per cent. more if they would turn out five, or something like that. We gradually worked it up in that way. It has been built up from the old daily labour costs of production.

M-2322. How long has that been in force ?—10 years I should think.

M-2323. Has there been no change in recent years ?—The rates have been adjusted from time to time.

M-2324. What steps have you taken to make first-aid easily available on your Railway ?—We have first-aid boxes in Railway stations and brake-vans. We give the staff a bonus for undergoing training in first-aid and we take it into consideration when the question of promotion comes up.

M-2325. What is the law on the subject of attachments for debt incurred by your employees and what is your practice ?—The Government rules lay down that a man who gets his pay attached must clear the debt in two years, or he will be liable to dismissal. We have a credit loan society on our Railway from which employees can take loans up to a certain amount provided they bring two or three sureties to back each application. In very bad cases, the man is allowed to resign, take his provident fund amount and pay off his debts. Such people we re-engage the next day. It is far better to do this than keeping the staff in debt and exposing them to temptations of bribery and corruption.

M-2326. What sort of staff can be members of your Loan Society ?—Strictly speaking, membership is confined to members of the Provident Fund. We used to take the Provident Fund amount at the man's credit as security for the loan, but under the new rules we cannot do it, therefore we ask the man to bring forward two or three sureties.

M-2327. Could an attachment order be put into effect even in the case of a man whose pay is less than what would entitle him to become a member of the Provident Fund ?—The attachment order is an order of the Court. We do not question whether it is legal or not ; we take it that the Court has considered that aspect of the question. I think an attachment order can be put into effect irrespective of the pay the man gets.

M-2328. Would you enquire and let us know the wage limit above which attachments are possible and below which attachments are impossible, and the number of attachments which you have had for the last two years ?—Yes, I shall let you have that.

M-2329. Could you also let us have a copy of the " Service Agreement " similar to the one which the other Railways in India have ?—Yes.

M-2330. Could you also tell us how many men you have discharged or dismissed under the terms of the agreement during last year ?—I doubt if I can get it. I shall have to look it up.

M-2331. Will you please refer to page 228 of the Railway Board Memorandum to us and give us a similar statement with regard to the number and cost of the staff in three different grades during 1913-14, 1920-21, and 1928-29 ?—I can only give you the Administration Reports of those years.

M-2332. Have you adopted the new rules regarding discharge and dismissal ?—Yes. We have adopted them.

M-2333. With regard to the cost of your buildings, did you include the cost of land also in the estimate you gave us of the cost of your houses for labourers on less than Rs. 30 or Rs. 40 a month ?—No, we did not include the cost of land. We put up buildings on our own land. If we included the cost of land also, our figures would mount up very high

(The witnesses withdrew.)

**BURMA.****Eleventh Meeting.**RANGOON (*Syriam*).*Thursday, 6th November 1930.*

(Morning.)

PRESENT :

The Rt. Hon'ble J. H. WHITLEY (*Chairman*).

Sir VICTOR SASSOON, Bart.

Sir ALEXANDER MURRAY, K.T., C.B.E.

Mr. A. G. CLOW, C.I.E., I.C.S.

Mr. KABIR-UD-DIN AHMED,  
Bar-at-Law.

Mr. G. D. BIRLA.

Mr. JOHN CLIFF.

Lt.-Col. A. J. H. RUSSELL, C.B.E.,  
I.M.S. (*Medical Assessor*).Mr. S. A. S. TYABJI, *Assistant Commissioner*.

Mr. S. LALL, I.C.S.

Mr. A. DIBDIN.

} *Joint Secretaries.*

(At the Syriam Candle Factory managed by the Burma Oil Company.)

**Statement by MA OHN SEIN, a Burmese woman candle packer.**

M-2334. I have worked here 5 or 6 years. I live in the barracks with my family. My husband works here.

M-2335. My wages are Rs. 30 a month.

M-2336. I work from 6 a.m. to 10-30 a.m. and from 12-30 to 4 p.m. am very happy at my work.

M-2337. At one time I was ill ; I went to the Company's hospital at Syriam. I received no pay while I was ill.

M-2338. It takes about a month to become efficient at my work.

M-2339. Most of the women doing my work are single ; I am married. A pregnant woman is not given leave with pay. A woman giving birth to a child stays away from work for 8 months or a year ; some poor women come back after 8 or 9 months, but the better off women come back after a year.

M-2340. I have no children. My husband and I are able to save about Rs. 10 to Rs. 15 a month.

M-2341. I am not in debt. When I save money I put it in my father's hands ; my husband agrees to that.

M-2342. There are 25 packets of candles in each bundle ; I can pack 100 to 120 bundles in a day. I am paid Rs. 1-8-0 for 100 bundles.

M-2343. I cannot say how many days I work in a year. I take one day's holiday a week. I am paid for the number of candles I pack ; there is no recognized holiday with pay.

M-2344. There is no pension or provident fund. We stop work on most of the big Burmese festival days but we get no pay for those days.

**Statement by SURDU AJAM, an Indian male candle packer.**

M-2345. I was born here ; my parents came from Gorakhpur. My father is dead ; my mother and her children are here. I once went to Gorakhpur with my mother. I obtained work here by approaching Mr. Anthony.

M-2346. Formerly I was getting a daily wage of 13 annas but now I am paid on piece-rates and if I get more work I get more wages.

M-2347. I get into debt. Last month October, I earned Rs. 20 ; in September I earned Rs. 14.

M-2348. I am not married. I live in the village with my mother. I have three brothers and a little sister ; my brothers are not working ; I am the only member of the family working.

M-2349. I have my own house and a big family and therefore we cannot stay in barracks. I should only get one room in the barracks and a family man does not care to stay here near the mill.

M-2350. My brothers do not work because they have not found a job ; my brothers are small. My father built the house ; he was working here.

**Statement by BHAGELU, a male candle box maker.**

M-2351. I come from Gorakhpur ; I have been here 12 years. My wife and family are in my country. During the last 12 years I have not been to my country.

M-2352. I send my wife Rs. 5 or Rs. 10 a month ; besides that I have some money there and that is utilized by my wife. I have no children ; I have a wife, a father and a mother. I have not been to visit my wife during these 10 years because I am in debt and so cannot go back.

M-2353. I still owe Rs. 500 or Rs. 600. My father took the loan for my marriage and other expenses. How am I to know how much the loan was in the beginning ? The debt was partly incurred on account of my coming here. Since I came here a lot of debt has been incurred by my father for daily expenses.

M-2354. I get letters from home and I write home. I make boxes here ; my work is not regular ; when there is work to do I make Rs. 25 a month ; when there is less work I may make Rs. 12 a month.

M-2355. I do not live in the barracks ; I live in a village. My countrymen are there and I like to be in their company ; if they all came here to the barracks I should come too. I pay 4 annas rent ; I should not have to pay any rent here.

M-2356. It costs me Rs. 10 for food and Rs. 4 to 6 for clothing. I cannot go to my own country as I cannot maintain myself there. I have been working in this factory since I first came here.

Mr. J. C. HOPE, Acting Works Manager, Mr. T. B. GIBSON, Acting General Manager, Mr. H. McINTOSH, Chief Works Assistant, and Mr. E. M. SHELVERTON, Labour Welfare Superintendent, representatives of the Burmah Oil Company's Refinery Works, Syriam (Rangoon).

M-2357. *The Chairman* : Mr. Hope, would it be possible for you to prepare a note for us giving fairly fully the actual scope of the activities of your welfare officer ?—(Mr. Hope) :—Yes.

M-2358. Could we have 2 or 3 copies of his monthly reports and, if you have it, his annual report or a sort of summary of his work ?—Yes.

M-2359. I understand that your system here differs from the one at Yenangyaung : you have a welfare officer, but not a Labour Bureau ?—We have a Labour Bureau, but the two are quite distinct.

M-2360. The engagement of your labour is done through your office ?—Yes.

M-2361. Not through the Welfare Superintendent ?—No.

M-2362. Is his whole time occupied in attending to the general welfare including the housing of your 7,500 workers ?—Yes.

M-2363. He is moving about in the barracks : he has a bungalow detached from your general works, where anybody can approach him with any grievance of any kind ?—Yes.

M-2364. Every grievance of whatever nature is investigated by him ?—Yes.

M-2365. And such as seem to require further attention are brought to the notice of the Manager ?—Yes.

M-2366. And in that way you have been able to get rid of *baksheesh* being required for engagements and promotions and perhaps unjust dismissals ?—Yes.

M-2367. For how many years have you had this Labour Welfare Officer ?—Eight years.

M-2368. You are fully satisfied as employers that he has been well worth the cost ?—Yes.

M-2369. Your people are more contented as their grievances, which may be small but very real to the individuals, have a chance of being heard and justly dealt with ?—Yes ; we are satisfied that is so.

M-2370. Has it had any noticeable effect on reducing your turnover, that is to say, the number of discharges ?—It is rather difficult to say, because we have been re-constructing our refinery recently and we have cut down our labour very considerably. I should say from my own personal knowledge and experience here that our men are more contented and stay on.

M-2371. I notice that you have, in the cause of efficiency, had to cut down your number of workers from about 9,500 to 7,500, but where you

had to dispense with the service of any men you have given them a month's wages plus the fare to return to their country ?—Yes. In all cases we have given them a month's pay in addition to what was due to them, to enable them to go back to their native places.

M-2372. I understand you have a special system of registration of workers, including both the thumb print and the photograph, and a system of recognized leave, so that they could go with an easy mind at the end of their three years' service for their three months' leave, feeling pretty sure that they could resume their occupation when they came back ?—They have three months' leave for three years' service.

M-2373. With an actual pledge of re-appointment ?—Yes.

M-2374. That is if they do not overstay their leave ?—Yes.

M-2375. And extensions are granted in proper cases ?—Yes.

M-2376. So that, in every way you do get a continuity of employment, which must be good both for you and the workers themselves ?—Yes.

M-2377. Could you supply the Commission with some samples of the cards actually filled up ?—Yes. (*Mr. McIntosh*) : There is also the Service Book which contains the identification marks.

M-2378. We have been told in some places that a system of registration which involved a thumb print and a photograph would be strongly objected to : has that been your experience here ?—Some of the men objected to it at first, with the result that we gave them certificates when they went on leave.

M-2379. Do you find the objection removed now, after a period of years ?—Yes. (*Mr. Hope*) : At the time we started the system of taking photographs, they went on strike over it for 11 days.

M-2380. Now they see that an advantage attaches to this registration and they willingly accept it ?—Yes.

M-2381. *Sir Alexander Murray* : The job on one of the cards is " Works No. P.-89 ". What would that job be ?—(*Mr. McIntosh*) : Wax packer. He packs wax in bags.

M-2382. How can you ear-mark it ?—It is the number which is really ear-marked.

M-2383. How many men have been in the job since 1922 ?—Six.

M-2384. And how many since 1924 ?—Five, on that number.

M-2385. That particular job had 5 men in 6 years ?—Yes.

M-2386. That is a big turnover ?—It does not represent turnover ; this merely records the men who worked on that number. Some of them were transferred to other numbers.

M-2387. *The Chairman* : Mr. Shelverton, I understand you at present house about 2,200 workmen ?—Yes.

M-2388. You are proposing to go further with that : what is your programme ?—(*Mr. Gibson*) : We have a scheme at our Dunneedaw installation, on the other side of the river. We are actually going ahead with it now, and we are going to build houses for 900 people out of 1,300, and there is a further scheme after that is completed. You have seen this morning the housing we provide in Syriam. We have acquired a piece of

land, and it is our intention to provide housing accommodation slowly as the men came into it. Our difficulty in the past has been to get the men to come into our housing.

M-2389. We were told just now by a man that he preferred to pay rent in the village, rather than come into your barracks, because his friends lived there, and that if they came along, he would also come in?—I do not think we can provide for an unlimited number of friends. We do not object to the men bringing their friends on a two days' visit; they can have 5 per cent. of the total number actually living there waiting for employment.

M-2390. With regard to the Indians who come for three years and then go home for three months, is there any possibility of their bringing their wives with them, if accommodation was provided?—I do not think so.

M-2391. You have referred in your memorandum to the prevalence of venereal disease, owing to the disproportion of the sex ratio: you have no policy on that point?—(*Mr. Hope*): No. We provide a few quarters for married people. (*Mr. Gibson*): The policy has been that if the Indians themselves showed any desire to live with their families, we would put up more married quarters. Where we have numbers of married people, we do put up quarters for them; we do not wish to get ahead of the demand. But I would not like to say definitely that if every labourer was married and all of them brought their families, it would be possible to cope with the situation. Indian labour so far has shown no inclination to bring their wives with them, and therefore we have not really made any provision for them. If they did bring their wives, then the Company would have to consider it. Their general policy would be to house a considerable number of their married employees.

M-2392. If they were willing to do so, you would like to accommodate them?—If there were Indians bringing their wives, we should then consider putting up married quarters for them.

M-2393. Mr. Shelverton, from your experience of the past 7 or 8 years and your close contact with these people, could you give us the reason why they do not wish to bring their wives and children over here?—(*Mr. Shelverton*): That has been the custom for many years now; they have never done it in Burma. They leave their wives in India and come over here as single men.

M-2394. Is the reason because they have land?—They have land in their country, and they want that land looked after.

M-2395. We came across a case just now of a man who had been here for 12 years; he had a wife in the country, and had not been home during the whole of that period: that seems rather an unhappy kind of case. He admitted to us that it was because of his heavy debt?—Very likely that is the case.

M-2396. On the question of debt, from your intimate experience of the workers here, could you suggest to us any steps that might be taken to relieve the unhappy position of indebtedness of many of them?—We have a credit and loan society here, and we have been persuading the men to join it.

M-2397. Has it been a success?—(*Mr. Hope*): This society was started in 1921 with 10 members and a capital of Rs. 75. It has now 1,121 members with a capital of Rs. 2,02,540.

M-2398. Does that show what has been put in by the men ?—Yes.

Is it not the case that they are always wanting to draw on it but never willing to pay in ?—They must put in the money. They become members by paying anything from Re. 1 a month.

M-2399. *Sir Alexander Murray* : What is the amount of your advances ?—The money is continually circulating. I have not got a note of that, but I have a copy of the list and value of the loans for the past year. I am informed that present loans amount to one lakh ; the balance is invested in Government paper.

M-2400. Do they go on repaying or accumulating ?—They repay by monthly instalments.

M-2401. *The Chairman* : When a man joins the co-operative loan society, does it free him entirely from the money-lenders : do they clear off all their debts ?—They are not supposed to go to a money-lender after having joined the society ; that is one of the rules. In most cases, after joining they have cleared off their debts.

M-2402. *Sir Alexander Murray* : How do you pay off the money-lenders ?—We advance the money to pay off the money-lender.

M-2403. *The Chairman* : You do not yourselves call the money-lender and compound with him ?—No ; one of the members of the Committee does it.

M-2404. *Mr. Birla* : To what extent can a man get an advance ?—Three months' pay according to the rules, but the committee have discretion in the matter.

M-2405. Has it to be guaranteed by some means ?—Either that or subscriptions in the society.

M-2406. *Mr. Tyabji* : When a man leaves your service, how does he get back his subscription ?—He resigns his membership, and everything that is due to him is paid to him.

M-2407. *The Chairman* : A considerable number of the members will be clerks ?—Yes, a good many.

M-2408. So that, it really hardly touches the bulk of the workers on Rs. 30 a month ?—No. We have some of that class as members, but their percentage is small.

M-2409. *Mr. Birla* : What happens to the money when a man is dismissed for negligence or some other reasons ?—He gets his money back. It has nothing to do with the Company. The society is run by a committee of the workmen themselves.

M-2410. Under no circumstances is the money forfeited ?—Never.

M-2411. *The Chairman* : Do you have any attachments of courts against your wages ?—Yes, occasionally.

M-2412. Could you tell us how many you have outstanding at the present moment, with the deductions that are being made from the wages ?—As a matter of fact we made a rule some time ago that if a man had an attachment made of his wages, he would be dismissed from the Company's service, unless he took steps to have the attachment removed.

M-2413. We heard of that on the oilfields : the same rule applies here ?—Yes.

M-2414. The purpose of that rule is to give the worker a larger power of resistance ?—(*Mr. Gibson*) : Some years ago we found out that there were a lot of clerks who were in debt, and we were getting showers of attachment orders. We instituted an enquiry, found out how the position was, relieved them of those debts against their provident fund, and told them that we would not stand the position again ; we pay them a good wage and we expect them to keep out of debt.

M-2415. Is the rule strictly enforced ?—To my knowledge yes. There are practically no attachment orders, and but for that rule there would be a larger number.

M-2416. I take it as employers you object to being made debt collectors ?—Yes, and we do like our staff to be in that unfortunate position. (*Mr. McIntosh*) : It discourages the money-lenders here.

M-2417. I suppose, if the law was altered so that the man's earnings could not be attached, that would discourage the money-lender from leading a man into so much debt. As employers, you would be in favour of that law being general ?—Yes.

M-2418. *Mr. Cliff* : Why did you change from 10 hours a day to 46 hours a week ?—(*Mr. Hope*) : Because there has been a great deal of labour trouble in India, and we wanted to be ahead of the times.

M-2419. You have had no difficulty with shorter working hours ?—No.

M-2420. I notice that the shift workers work 7 days, 8 hours a day : is there any difficulty about them having a weekly rest ?—As a matter of fact the question was discussed before the Chamber of Commerce two or three years ago, and on behalf of the Burmah Oil Co. I made some enquiries among our men and they said they had 16 hours out of 24 for rest, and they did not want a holiday. It meant less pay and the men would go to Rangoon more frequently and spend their earnings there.

M-2421. Is there any practical difficulty from the point of view of the employers ?—It simply means that we employ more men, although we would not pay more wages. We have that system in some Departments as it is, where day shift only is worked.

M-2422. Can you tell us what your exemption is ? You say " Complete holiday of 24 hours not possible under Works method of changing shift ". What is that method ?—(*Mr. McIntosh*) : The Factory Act says that at change of shift the men may work 16 hours in the 24, provided that at the next periodical change of shift he gets 24 hours off. Under our method, 2 shifts get 16 hours off each and the third shift 12 hours off.

M-2423. Under that system, the maximum is 16 hours, and for every change of shift out of 3 he obtains 12 hours ?—Yes.

M-2424. *The Chairman* : It has been suggested to us that it would be better for the workers if the Factories Act made provision for the 24 hours being from 6 to 6 if desired, instead of being necessarily from midnight to midnight : have you any view on that ?—(*Mr. Hope*) : It would make no difference to us, as far as the process is concerned ; one will be as good as the other.

M-2425. *Mr. Cliff* : It is stated in your note that the Labour Welfare Officer investigates complaints in connection with matters arising

out of employment : can he make representations in respect of grade of labour, wages, or anything of that kind ?—No. He will act in a case of alleged wrongful dismissal.

M-2426. He cannot deal with conditions of labour ?—No.

M-2427. What is the attitude of the Company towards trade unions ? Would you oppose trade unions being instituted here ?—No.

M-2428. I noticed that you have boards here saying " Trespassers are prosecuted ". What facilities do you give to friends of labour coming into the barracks ?—Would a trade union organizer be allowed to work in the barracks ?—(*Mr. Gibson*) : Our desire about trade unions is that they should be properly organized and registered. At present there is no trade union organization here in the way that you have at home. Provided they are properly organized, we are quite prepared to work in with any trade unions and to give facilities to the organizers to go to the barracks, or anything else.

M-2429. What are the headman's duties in the barracks ?—(*Mr. Shelverton*) : He has to see that the barracks are kept clean. He has to look to the behaviour of the men, and where necessary he makes a report.

M-2430. Are the headmen working in the refinery ?—They all work in the refinery. They get extra pay for that, and they get home leave with<sup>1</sup> pay.

M-2431. How many beds are there in the Syriam hospital ?—(*Mr. Hope*) : There are 52 beds and the average daily attendance is 70 patients.

● M-2432. You contribute one-third of the cost ?—Yes.

M-2433. *Sir Alexander Murray* : You have no *maistries* in the accepted sense of the term ?—No, except for a few river workers.

M-2434. Who handles your stuff at the jetties ?—Our own coolies.

M-2435. *Mr. Clow* : Why did you change your system of recruiting your women workers through contractors to one of direct recruitment ?—Because they were being sweated.

M-2436. You found that otherwise they would get more wages ?—Undoubtedly.

M-2437. *The Chairman* : Was there any increased cost or economy to the Company ?—No.

M-2438. Was the work done as well and as cheaply ?—Yes.

M-2439. With much better conditions for the worker ?—Yes.

M-2440. You are in favour of direct employment wherever practicable ?—Yes. In 1919 we abolished the *maistry* system of recruiting entirely. Our men are now employed directly through the Labour Bureau. We do not recognize the *maistries* now for recruiting purposes ; the men come themselves.

M-2441. *Mr. Clow* : What happened to the *maistries* ? Did they strike ?—No.

M-2442. *The Chairman* : You put them into the position of supervisors only ?—Yes. We never paid our men through the *maistries* as they do in Rangoon. But the *maistries* brought the men and no doubt took bribes for bringing them.

M-2443. Are you confident that there is no bribery going on now ?—I will not say that there is no bribery ; there may be, but we of course do not countenance it, and therefore the men resist attempts to extract money from them.

M-2444. Mr. Shelverton, you tabulate all the grievances, however small, that reach you, every month ?—Yes.

M-2445. Could you let us have copies of three of your monthly reports ?—(*Mr. Shelverton*) Yes.

M-2446. Could you tell us about how many complaints or matters you have to deal with in the course of a month ?—25 to 30.

M-2447. You call them grievances ?—Yes.

M-2448. What proportion of those come under different subjects ?—Five will be illegal or wrongful discharges ; about 2 will be about *maistries* asking for bribes, and the others would be about quarrels with other men and domestic troubles.

M-2449. Do you tabulate those for a year ?—No. I just have monthly reports. At the end of the year I make out a tabulated form showing how many cases I have investigated of complaints from workmen regarding dismissal, etc., and quarrels and disputes amongst the workmen.

M-2450. If a complaint made to you is, in your opinion, a just one, you are in a position to be the advocate of the worker as against the Company ?—Yes.

M-2451. You find the Company in nearly all cases is ready to accept your view as to the justice of the complaint ?—Yes.

M-2452. Therefore, as far as your knowledge goes, there are no complaints left without a remedy ?—That is so.

M-2453. *Mr. Ahmed* : You have expressed your sympathy with trade unionism and you tell us you have eliminated the *maistries* and contractor system ; why is it that your Company do not follow your example at Yenangyaung ?—

*Mr. Cliff* : The evidence at the oil field was that they were in favour of and welcomed representations from a proper trade union.

M-2454. *Mr. Ahmed* : With regard to engaging labour do you follow the same principles as are followed at Yenangyaung ?—(*Mr. Gibson*) : Not quite ; there are differences to suit the conditions under which we are working. We do not recruit through *maistries* either here or at the oil field and we have nothing to do with contractors. We work through a labour bureau. Certain work is given out to contractors up there, but it is given out definitely to contractors ; it has nothing to do with the *maistry* system.

M-2455. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Have you any seasonal work here or is it always steady employment ?—Always steady employment.

M-2456. *Mr. Ahmed* : You have *sardars*, have you not ?—Men are chosen to be headmen of the various barracks ; they are responsible for

the cleanliness and order in the barracks. A headman may be anybody : he may be a tindal or the commonest coolie. He is a monitor in the barracks ; he has no control over the men at their work. In addition to his wages he is paid Rs. 5 a month by the Company.

M-2457. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Are you working full time in the refinery ?—Yes, always full time. We are not working full time in the candle factory.

M-2458. Is that why there are fluctuations in the wages earned ?—Yes.

M-2459. How do you estimate the wages of the candle factory ?—It is an average wage for the last 3 months of 1928 when we were working full time.

M-2460. *Mr. Ahmed* : Do these *sardars* receive a salary of from Rs. 120 to Rs. 150 ?—No, they only get Rs. 5 a month paid by the Company in addition to their wages.

M-2461. What are their wages ?—Their wages may be anything ; a man may be getting 15 annas a day and receiving this extra Rs. 5 a month.

M-2462. One of these *sardars* told me he got Rs. 120 to 150 a month ?—You must have asked one of the headmen who happened also to be a tindal ; for instance, Woyce Din, who is a tindal, gets Rs. 90 a month pay and another Rs. 5 for headman at the barracks, which makes it up to Rs. 95.

M-2463. A worker in the candle factory told us he had been working there for 12 years, during which time he had not seen the face of his wife ; he said he could hardly maintain himself. If these people were given residential quarters, they could bring their wives ; but you say : Let them bring their wives first and then we shall consider about residences for them ?—We already have some married quarters. We watch the tendency of our labour and keep just ahead of the demands they make on us. We have 13 families at present living here.

M-2464. *Mr. Tyabji* : Are your *khalasis* treated as skilled workmen with reference to provident fund and similar matters ?—(*Mr. Hope*) Yes, all men earning not less than Rs. 30 a month are eligible for the provident fund.

M-2465. Do not a large number of these *khalasis* earn less than Rs. 30 ?—(*Mr. McIntosh*) The lowest pay of the cargo boat *khalasis* is 15 annas a day ; they draw about Rs. 28 or Rs. 29 a month and therefore would not be eligible for the provident fund. The launch men earn over Rs. 30 a month. (*Mr. Hope*) Men getting Rs. 1-3-0 a day (26 working days per month) or Rs. 30 a month are eligible.

M-2466. Although these *khalasis* are skilled workmen, they do not enjoy the benefits of a skilled workman ?—(*Mr. Gibson*). It has nothing to do with being a skilled workman ; it depends on the wages.

M-2467. Is there any reason why the provident fund should not be extended so that men earning less than Rs. 30 could join if they wished ?—We have looked into the matter and we think it is best that the provident fund should be restricted to men earning not less than Rs. 30. Speaking

generally, I do not think that men earning less than Rs. 30 desire to join ; in fact, I think it would be a hardship for them to do so. They cannot afford it.

M-2468. *Mr. Birla* : In view of the fall of the prices of commodities, would it not be better to make Rs. 25 the limit ?—If the Commission are of that opinion, I have no doubt my directors will be quite willing to enquire into it. (*Mr. Hope*). From the accounting point of view, it is difficult to have a migratory coolie in the provident fund.

M-2469. *Mr. Tyabji* : The labour policy at Syriam is different from that at Yenangyaung ?—(*Mr. Gibson*). Yes, in some points.

M-2470. For instance, they give 6 holidays a year with full pay, whereas you only give 3 ?—(*Mr. Hope*) Possibly that is due to the fact that we employ a different kind of labour. The labour at Yenangyaung is mostly Burmese ; in the fields they must cater for the Burmese as being the predominating race. (*Mr. Gibson*). Our labour rules on the fields were arrived at as a compromise amongst other complaints after a strike.

M-2471. Do you want a strike to make you increase the number of holidays here ?—No, certainly not. We could do it, but the men are perfectly satisfied.

M-2472. At Yenangyaung they have a works committee, whereas here you depend solely on your Labour Superintendent ?—(*Mr. Hope*) Yes.

M-2473. Do you not think it would be an advantage to have a works committee here ?—We did attempt to establish a works committee here at one time, but the attendance was so poor that it was not worth carrying on.

M-2474. Possibly that was because the members were nominated ?—No. (*Mr. Gibson*) At Yenangyaung an elected committee is in an experimental stage and we have not had time yet to profit by their experience. We should not have any objection to it if the workers showed any desire for anything of the kind. (*Mr. Gibson*) : Here we have so many different kinds of labour, whereas at Yenangyaung the jobs are more scattered. We do not need a committee here.

(The witnesses withdrew.)

## BURMA.

Eleventh meeting.

RANGOON.

Thursday, 6th November 1930.

(Afternoon.)

PRESENT :

The Rt. Hon'ble J. H. WHITLEY (*Chairman*).

Sir VICTOR SASSOON, Bart.  
 Sir ALEXANDER MURRAY, KT., C.B.E.  
 Mr. A. G. CLOW, C.I.E., I.C.S.  
 Mr. KABIR-UD-DIN AHMED, Bar-at-Law.

Mr. G. D. BIRLA.  
 Mr. JOHN CLIFF.  
 Lt.-Col. A. J. H. RUSSELL, C.B.E.,  
 I.M.S. (*Medical Assessor*).

- Mr. J. TAIT.

U AYE MAUNG.

Mr. S. A. S. TYABJI.

U HLA BU.

Mrs. TE TE LUCE, *Lady Assessor*.

Mr. S. LALL, I.C.S.

Mr. A. DIBDIN.

} *Assistant Commissioners.*} *Joint Secretaries.*

Mr. A. B. MALLETT, Asstt. Manager, British India Steam Navigation Company, and Mr. J. C. TRELEAVEN, Cargo Superintendent, British India Steam Navigation Company, representatives of Messrs. Bulloch Brothers, Ltd., Agents, British India Steam Navigation Company Ltd.

M-2475. *The Chairman* : Has your Company for a long time past worked by means of this organization of a Cargo Superintendent instead of contracting with a stevedore ?—(*Mr. Mallett*) It has been the practice in all of the chief ports in India with our Company including Rangoon.

M-2476. What percentage of traffic of the port of Rangoon does your Company handle ?—Our Company handles 40 per cent. of the total tonnage of ships and about 30 per cent. of the actual cargo, excluding coal and oil.

M-2477. *Mr. Cliff* : Would you give us an idea of your labour turnover throughout the year—in the busy season and the slack season ?—In the busy season between January and March we employ on an average about 80 gangs of 15 men each—about 40 gangs each day and 40 gangs each night. It is equivalent to 600 men each day and 600 men each night. In April when the busy season is gradually closing we employ on an average about 35 gangs each day and about 35 gangs each night, which is equivalent to 525 men each day and about the same number each night. In the slack season from May to December we have much less ; we employ on an average only about 22 gangs each day and about 22 gangs each

night, which is equivalent to 330 men for each day and about the same number each night. Thus we range from about 80 gangs in the busy season to 44 gangs in the slack season.

M-2478. Is there no variation in the number of gangs you employ each day in the busy season or in the slack season?—Yes. But the variation is not so frequent in the busy season as in the slack season as the steamers work almost continuously in the former. The variation in the busy season would be from say 75 to 90 gangs per day and night and in the slack season from 40 to 54 gangs per day and night.

M-2479. Your peak during the slack season is 22 gangs, plus 5 gangs in reserve?—Yes, per day.

M-2480. Are any of these gangs permanently employed by the Company?—No, they are all casual labour.

M-2481. When you come down from 40 gangs to 35 gangs and then to 22 gangs do you give any priority of employment to those who have been longest with you and so on? Do you keep any record of the service of the men?—No. I think many of the labourers come over here just for the busy shipping season between January and March|April and leave in May. They generally stay here for three busy months and one slack month and then go away.

M-2482. Is it your belief that the men come here for the busy season, work for three months and then go away?—Yes, many of them do. Very many of them. The rest stay for 15 months, to get two busy seasons and one slack season.

M-2483. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : Very many of them?—How many would they be?—I think about 400 to 600.

M-2484. *Mr. Cliff* : What does it cost them to go to and fro?—Single fare is Rs. 9-8-0. Then there is the tax of Rs. 2 on passengers leaving Rangoon.

M-2485. Do you notice any variation in the personnel of your gang *maistries* ; are they pretty regular or permanent?—(*Mr. Treleven*) They are fairly regular ; they do not change much.

M-2486. *The Chairman* : Does the gang *maistry* pay his labourers immediately after he receives the wages from you, or does he wait till the next shift comes along?—I think he pays immediately after. If there were any delay we should probably have complaints about it.

M-2487. *Mr. Cliff* : Do you expect any practical difficulties if you wanted to pay wages direct to the labourers?—Yes, I think there would be many difficulties. We once tried to pay the Burmese labour direct. I began to pay the coolies individually. Before I paid four or five coolies the foreman of the gang came along and argued and this man was not in the gang and that man was not in the gang and so on. Naturally I had to ask several other labourers before I made sure whether a particular man was really working in the gang or not, because I had no list giving the names of the persons working in the gang, being casual labour.

M-2488. *The Chairman* : You had several men slipping into the queue to draw wages without doing any work?—Yes.

M-2489. *Mr. Cliff* : Had you to pay additional wages on account of these extra men ?—No, but the difficulty was to confirm which men had actually worked in each gang.

M-2490. With regard to overcrowding in tenement houses occupied by labourers, do you think that the labourers could get additional accommodation if they wanted to ?—(*Mr. Mallett*) No, I do not think they could get it in the busy season, as Rangoon is very crowded then.

M-2491. What is the kind of legislation which you contemplate in order to prevent overcrowding ?—My predecessor wrote the memorandum. In view of my previous remark, I do not see what legislation can be introduced.

M-2492. When you have about 40 gangs employed in the busy season, how many shifts would each gang get in a month ?—I think each gang would get from 22 to 25 shifts a month, so each labourer would earn from Rs. 38-8-0 to Rs. 42-12-0 at the rate of Rs. 1-12-0 a day. We endeavour to rotate the gangs so that one gang may not get a great deal more than another gang.

M-2493. How many shifts would each gang get in the slack season when you have only about 22 gangs working ?—During the slack season the men do not get so many shifts. I think they would average 14 or 15 shifts in a month, that is each man would earn from Rs. 24-8-0 to Rs. 26-4-0 in a month.

M-2494. *Mr. Birla* : Do you recruit all your labour in Burma or a part also in India ?—We do not recruit any labour in India. The head *maistry* and the gang *maistries* make up their gangs from labour available in Burma.

M-2495. Has your Company got some agents in India to recruit labour and do they get commission for such work ?—We have no agents for recruiting labourers ; we have recruiters in the Coromandel Districts to recruit and assist Deck passengers.

M-2496. What is the object of your having agents to recruit passengers ? If a man wants to come to Rangoon will he not find his way to your steamers ?—When the system was originally started the intention was to assist the coolies living far away from the coast to reach our ships and also to encourage them to migrate to Rangoon. But now the recruiters simply assist the coolies to the coast and in connection with their passages.

M-2497. *The Chairman* : Have those agents anything to do with their subsequent employment ?—No.

M-2498. *Mr. Birla* : What is the total number of passengers recruited through your agents in this way ?—I do not know ; we are only Agents in Rangoon. Perhaps the Calcutta Managing Agents might be able to give you the information.

M-2499. What commission is paid to these agents for recruiting passengers ?—I do not know.

M-2500. When there is so much of unemployment in Burma among the working classes, why does your Company encourage people of the working classes to come to Rangoon ?—As stated before, the Recruiters assist coolies wishing to come to Rangoon.

M-2501. Since your agents are paid a commission on the basis of the number of passengers recruited, is it not possible that they might adopt objectionable methods to induce people to go to Rangoon without caring whether there is any chance for their employment here or not?—If objectionable methods were employed the Company would soon hear of it and put a stop to it.

M-2502. With regard to payment of wages to the labourers do you make yourself sure that the *maistry* does not employ less than the stated number of men in the gang and appropriate some portion of the wages to himself?—We have a supervisor on board the steamer who makes out the pay roll, the Chief Officer of the ship signs it and then it is checked by the head *maistry* and the head clerk. We have thus four checks and it works all right.

M-2503. How are the wages that you pay the head *maistry* distributed among the head *maistry*, the gang *maistry*, and the gangmen who are the real workers?—The head *maistry* is on a fixed pay of about Rs. 70 a month. The gang *maistry* is paid Rs. 2-1-0 a day for the days he works. The coolies are paid Rs. 1-12-0 a shift. In addition to these there is a custom in Rangoon by which there is always one man short in the gang. When I ask for a gang of 16 men, the *maistry* will supply only a gang of 15 men. The pay of the 16th man is divided between the head *maistry* and the gang *maistry*. This custom has been in force for many years, and is the custom of the port.

M-2504. *The Chairman* : Are you sure that the *maistries* do not get any other perquisite in addition to half the pay of the 16th man?—Yes.

M-2505. Would there be any difficulty in adding that customary payment to the salary of the head *maistry* and the gang *maistry* and getting rid of this fiction of the 16th man?—(*Mr. Treleven*) There will be difficulty, because the gang *maistry* is not a permanent man. He is only a casual labourer.

M-2506. If there were only 14 men instead of the customary 15, how would you find it out and what would you pay?—The bill is checked by the Supervisor and Chief Officer on board and if there were only 14 men we would pay only for 14 men, *plus* of course one extra, as customary.

M-2507. *Mr. Birla* : Is this custom of having one man short in a gang universal for all kinds of cargo, or does the number vary with different kind of cargo? For instance, it has been suggested that in the case of tiles, if a gang is expected to have 20 men they will have only 17 and the *maistries* will pocket the wages of the three men who are not employed. What is the actual practice?—(*Mr. Mallett*) The total number of the gang depends on the kind of cargo handled, but it is always only one short, whatever the kind of cargo handled.

M-2508. Not shorter than that?—No.

M-2509. Does not the *maistry* pay the workers less than what he receives from you as wages for the workers?—If the *maistry* paid the labourers less than what he got from us on their behalf, we should have heard complaints about it. The *maistries* very often pay in the office itself.

M-2510. Have the labourers ever complained to you about such practices?—No.

M-2511. Have you come across the interesting document which was filed as an exhibit in the Court of the Additional District Magistrate in Rangoon in 1925, relating to the partnership between Yellamilli Narayana-swami and Ramdevu Audinarayana who were working as contractors to your Company? It was stated in the exhibit that

- (1) Whilst according to the order of the Company there should be 17 persons for a gang for every ship having a cargo of bags, we will send 15 deducting the remaining two persons' profit accruing by such deduction.
- (2) Whilst according to the order of the Company, there should be 20 persons for a ship having a cargo of tiles, we have been sending 17 deducting the wages of these remaining persons in respect of each gang aforesaid.
- (3) Whilst there should be 8 winchmen for every steamer we have been sending four deducting the wages of the remaining four persons in respect of the above.
- (4) Whilst the Company was giving Rs. 1-13-0 for every gang *maistry*, we have been paying Rs. 1-8-0. In addition to the sum of annas five thus saved in respect of every *maistry*, the sum of Re. 1 of every bill.

Was your attention drawn to these very serious allegations?—Neither Mr. Treleven nor I was in Rangoon in 1925.

M-2512. Was any action taken by the Company as a result of the allegations made in the document?—I do not know. I will have to look up the case.

M-2513. Is the state of affairs the same now as it was in 1925?—No. If such a state of affairs existed now we should certainly have complaints about it.

M-2514. *Mr. Clow* : Do you recruit any seamen here?—No, all our seamen are employed in Calcutta.

M-2515. Suppose a seaman fell sick, how would you make up the shortage?—We have always a number of ships in port and we can transfer men on similar articles from one ship to another with mutual consent, or replace them from Calcutta.

M-2516. Do you employ one stevedore?—Yes, occasionally we give a ship to Mr. Harikrishna Pillai as he has been very helpful to the Company on various occasions.

M-2517. Not because you need him, but because of past services?—Yes, it is done in recognition of past services.

M-2518. Do you deal with cases of workmen's compensation here?—Yes, but through the local Commissioner for Workman's compensation.

M-2518-A. Are you correct when you say that your hours are ten a day?—There is a mistake in the memorandum. The hours are from 6 A.M. to 5-0 P.M. and again from 6-0 P.M. to 5-0 A.M.—11 hours a day.

M-2519. Has it always been so or has it altered since the memorandum was written?—It has always been so.

M-2520. Is there any rest interval in the middle of the day?—No, there is no fixed rest interval. The gang goes on working all the time cargo is alongside, but two or three men go off for food and rest in turns.

M-2521. Suppose the work was unfinished at 5 o'clock, what would happen?—It is continued by the next shift which comes along at 6 o'clock.

M-2522. Would there be any difficulty if you allowed them to take their rest interval in shifts at fixed hours, some at one time and others half an hour later and so on?—Yes, because that would delay the loading of the ship. Even now they get a lot of intervals, for meals and rest, whilst slings are being made up in the cargo boats or on the wharf and whilst empty cargo boats are being shifted and full ones being got into position alongside the ship's hatches.

M-2523. Do you not think that work of this nature is too taxing to do all day long in a climate of this kind?—The men do not work continuously for 11 hours. Though they are on the ship for 11 hours they may not work for more than five or six hours. It depends on the arrival of cargo.

M-2524. *Sir Alexander Murray* : How many gang *maistries* have you got on your register?—About 90.

M-2525. Would you give us a statement showing the total number of *maistries* that you have and the total number of shifts worked in a year so that we might see how many shifts each *maistry* gets in a year.—Yes I can let you have one.

M-2526. How do you see that the work is shared fairly among all the *maistries* and that one *maistry* does not get a great deal more than another?—(*Mr. Treleaven*) : Generally I leave it to the discretion of the head *maistry*. But if I find from the labour bills of the *maistries* that one *maistry* is getting more than another in one week I adjust it next week and as far as possible see that the work is shared evenly among all the *maistries*. But when *maistries* show very good results this is taken into consideration to enable us to keep labour up to a high standard such as is very often required on mail steamers, which have a limited stay in port and have to sail to schedule.

M-2527. You said that the head *maistry* gets a fixed pay of something like Rs. 70 a month. You also said that he gets half the wages of the extra man in each gang. Suppose you have 80 gangs working during the busy season the head *maistry* will get the wages of 40 men or Rs. 70 a day in addition to his monthly pay?—Yes.

M-2528. Rs. 70 a day is a very big sum?—(*Mr. Mallett*) : That could be used as a very good argument that the *maistry* does not "bleed" the coolies.

M-2529. *The Chairman* : It is a method of evading income-tax?—I hope not.

M-2530. Would it not be better to abolish that system and have the payment direct instead of this indirect payment?—That could be considered. It would, however, be preferable for stevedores and the Company to have the same system.

M-2531. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Could you send us a statement showing in parallel columns the number of men you employ and the number employed by any other stevedore here in Rangoon for doing exactly the same type of work ?—I will endeavour to do so.

M-2532. I take it that the rates of wages you have given in your memorandum are the old rates before the strike occurred ?—Yes.

M-2533. Will you tell us in what way you were affected by the strike ?—The *hartal* was declared on Monday night. On Tuesday morning we worked a certain number of ships and a few more that night. On Wednesday morning we were working fairly freely. On Wednesday night one of the stevedores increased the rate by 4 annas and on Thursday morning all the shipping coolies went on strike.

M-2534. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : You said in answer to Mr. Cliff that your peak load in the busy season would be about 1,350 men including your spare men and in the slack season it would be about 735 men *plus* about 5 spare gangs. That makes a difference between your busy season and your slack season of about 600 men. How many of those 600 do you think go back to their country in the slack season ?—It is very difficult to answer that question as we keep no record of such casual labour. But, as stated before, I think about 400 to 600 go back to India after a busy season.

M-2535. I suppose there is a way by which you could make a guess. If the whole 600 men went home there would be as many days work in the slack season per man as in the busy season. But you have not got that ; you have only got 14 to 16 days instead of 22 to 25. In view of the fact that you are only having 14 to 16 days and in view also of the fact that even in the slack season your requirements are more stable and more evenly spread than other people, are not you really in a position in the slack season to cut down the number of gangs that you use so that you could employ your 735 men for more days ?—The *maistries* recruit and control the gangs. We have about 90 *maistries* and endeavour to give each a fair share of the work. If, in the slack season, a *maistry* has not his original full gang formed at the commencement of the busy season, owing to some of the men having returned to India, he presumably borrows men from other *maistries* to get a full gang whenever he is offered a shift.

M-2536. What I want to suggest is that if you could decasualize a part of your labour by encouraging a certain number to go home you would be giving more wages to those who remain and you would be helping the housing problem in the monsoon when they cannot sleep out in the roads and have to sleep under cover in a very restricted accommodation ?—I do not see how the Company could decasualize a part of such casual labour under *maistries*. If the men want to go home after the busy season they go ; if not they stay and endeavour to get work from either ourselves, stevedores or mills.

M-2537. If 600 of your people went home the rest would be employed for about 22 to 25 days whether in the slack season or in the busy season ?—Not necessarily, with 90 *maistries* taking turn and turn about.

M-2538. Although you call it casual labour, I take it that a large number of your workers will be working more or less regularly for your gang *maistries* ?—Yes, that is so, generally speaking.

M-2539. So that if you could devise a method by which 600 of your men, or let us say a percentage, 4 or 5, went home before the monsoon

you would be paying the balance something nearer the busy season wages than you are to-day?—My contention is that quite a number of them go home of their own accord.

M-2540. The figures rather show that they do not?—No record is kept by us, as the labour is casual.

M-2541. Let us take your own labour. You said yourself that you decrease the number of gangs in the slack season. I am suggesting that you should decrease it a little more. Instead of decreasing it from 80 to 40 you can decrease it from 80 to 30 and employ those 30 more or less regularly which would encourage them to go home and thus make the housing problem less difficult?—The Company does not decrease the number of gangs. It employs less gangs in the slack season, according to its requirements than in the busy season, the work being divided between about 90 *maistries*. I do not see how your suggestion could be carried out the labour being casual.

M-2542. *The Chairman* : Your present policy is to spread the work over the number that remain?—Yes.

M-2543. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : On what principle do you decide as to which gang *maistries* should be kept on and which should not in the slack season?—Some of the gang *maistries* themselves go home and as far as possible the work is spread over between the others.

M-2544. I thought that the number 40 given by you was a fixed number? If the number depends upon those who leave then you will have 80 gangs if none of your gang *maistries* leave and only 40 if half of them leave. Will you tell us how you arrived at the figure 40?

*The Chairman* : On what principle do you reduce your gangs from 80 to 40 as between your busy season and your slack season?—(*Mr. Treleaven*) : There is no principle. The position is as explained by *Mr. Mallett*.

M-2545. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : It just happens that half of them do regularly go home?—I should think so.

M-2546. *Mr. Ahmed* : I understand that there is unemployment among the labour class and that the question of employing a labourer is entirely in the hands of *maistries* who go to India for the purpose of recruiting men?

*The Chairman* : We have been told that they are all recruited here in Rangoon and that *maistries* do not go to India to recruit.

M-2547. *Mr. Ahmed* : You think that gang *maistries* get their supply of labour here and that they do not go to India to recruit?—(*Mr. Mallett*) : That is so, as far as I know.

M-2548. I take it that it is not your concern to see whether the *maistry* gets his supply of labour from India or from here?—The head *maistry* and gang *maistries* form the gangs from labour in Rangoon.

M-2549. I suppose the head *maistries* are selected by you?—Yes, the head *maistry*, we have only one head *maistry*.

M-2550. These head *maistries* are much better off than the labourers, are they not?—Yes.

M-2551. Does the head *maistry* look after the messing of any of the men under him ?—(*Mr. Treleaven*) : I do not think so.

M-2552. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : Does the gang *maistry* arrange for their messing ?—I think quite a lot of them live together ; in many cases the whole gang live together.

M-2553. The gang *maistry* might arrange for their messing ?—I should not be surprised at all if he did it.

M-2554. *Mr. Ahmed* : Who looks after these labourers when they are sick ?—(*Mr. Mallett*) : If they have an accident on board we send them to the General Hospital ; if they are sick they can go to the General Hospital. We have a Company's doctor also for the Indian shore staff by the name of Dr. Choudhry, to whom any one can go.

M-2555. May I know whether Dr. Choudhry attends on your staff at the work spot or in his own private place ?—(*Mr. Treleaven*) : In his own private place, or on board in the case of an accident necessitating a doctor's presence.

M-2556. Who are the people that can go to him for treatment at your charge ?—Any one who takes a chit from any of our Chief Officers that the injury was caused during the course of work. In other cases of sickness the man has to pay his own bill or otherwise go to the General Hospital which is free.

M-2557. *Mr. Cliff* : There is no medical attention during sickness ?—Only as just stated.

M-2558. *Mr. Ahmed* : Do these people get any recognized leave ?—(*Mr. Mallett*) : No, they are all casual labour.

M-2559. Are they entitled to any pension ?—No.

M-2560. I take it that there is no direct relationship between you and the labour ?—We know some of the coolies' faces. We know that a good many of them do work more or less regularly for us. Any coolie can approach the Cargo Superintendent or Assistant Cargo Superintendent on any matter.

M-2561. The coolies names are not registered in your books ?—No.

M-2562. *Mr. Tyabji* : I think you said that the lowest number of people you employ during the slack season is about 600. Is it not possible for you to employ these 600 permanently throughout the year ?—That is a question which could be considered. It is one which does not rest with me but with the Managing Agents at Calcutta. It is practicable, I think.

M-2563. If you did that it would greatly decrease casual and seasonal unemployment, and those men who know that they would not get employment during the slack season would either try to get work elsewhere or go home ?—It would assist in that direction.

*Sir Alexander Murray* : Only so far as the B. I. S. N. Co.'s labour is concerned.

M-2564. *Mr. Tyabji* : If you had to employ them permanently then the question of difficulties of direct payment would disappear ?—We could make direct payment to anyone employed permanently.

M-2565. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : Probably you would get men at cheaper rate if you were to engage them permanently ?—Yes, I think so.

M-2566. *Mr. Tait* : Is it not a fact that on some days of the week you would have employment for only a number of your total labour force while on other days of the week you would require almost double that number ?—Permanent labour could only be considered for our minimum requirements.

M-2567. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : You count on a minimum of about 600 ?—That is only a rough estimate. I should have to consider the figure and position more carefully.

M-2568. *Mr. Tyabji* : Did you not have quite a number of fatal accidents on your boats this year ?—Three Burmese coolies were killed, and there was a drowning case. There may have been other cases which I do not recollect for the moment.

M-2569. From the Government report I find that you had six fatal accidents and one temporary disablement. May I enquire whether you pay compensation in such cases ?—Yes, all cases go through Mr. Page, who is the Commissioner for workmen's compensation.

M-2570. In your ships have you had any fatal accidents with regard to gassing in holds ?—We had one.

M-2571. What action was taken in regard to that ?—It was immediately reported to the Police and to the Port Health Officer.

M-2572. Was any action taken to prevent accidents of that nature ?—Extra ventilation has been put in the ship. As a matter of fact, we have not been able to find out definitely from what source the gas formed.

M-2573. *U Hla Bu* : You know that according to the proposals of the Conciliation Board you have to employ Burmese and Indian labour on 50—50 basis ?—Yes.

M-2574. Do you recruit the Burmese through the Burmese Labour Bureau ?—(*Mr. Treleven*) : Just after the Bureau started I made our Burmese labourers register themselves at the Bureau.

M-2575. That was after you took them in, but when you wanted further Burmese labour did you indent through the Bureau ?—No.

M-2576. You are not sure whether all your Burmese labour have registered themselves at the Bureau or not ?—At the present moment I do not know, but I knew at one time that they were all registered.

M-2577. Are they as efficient as Indian labourers ?—Not as yet.

M-2578. From a business point of view will you be glad overturn this arrangement of taking Burmese and Indian labour in equal numbers ?—(*Mr. Mallett*) : The Shipping Companies agreed to accept the Conciliation Board's proposal to employ Burmese and Indians. The Burmese are improving and we are just watching the position to see whether they can perform the work at the same economic rate as the Indians.

M-2579. *The Chairman* : Has it been more expensive ?—Certainly. Inexperienced labour is always more expensive than trained labour.

M-2580. Does it remain in the same position now as it was six months ago ?—No, it is improving very greatly.

M-2581. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : Do you anticipate that they would improve to such an extent that they would cost no more than the Indian

labour ?—We are watching the position very closely. Though at present they are not as economical I do not see any reason why they should not be in time and with training.

M-2582. *U Hla Bu* : I understand that some stevedores are thinking of overturning the present arrangement if Government refuse to make up the loss incurred by the employment of Burmese labour by giving a subsidy. Do you not agree with me that if the present system is changed it might lead to a strike ?

*The Chairman* : That will be a prophesy. We must be satisfied that they are improving very greatly.

M-2583. You have not put before us any complaint that that they are too great a burden on you ?—As I said, they are improving. We are seeing whether they can come down to the same economic rate as the Indian, but if they cannot something will of course have to be done.

M-2584. You are doing your best to let them improve their capacity ?—I think so.

M-2585. With regard to the engagement of seamen, I think you said that sometimes they are transferred from one ship to another. We have been told several times that seamen object to work under any except their own serangs. Have you found that difficulty here ?—No, because such transfers are generally made only for short periods.

M-2586. As soon as may be, if the man desires he can get back to his original ship ?—That is so.

(The witnesses withdrew.)

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**Mr. W. T. HENRY, Manager, and Mr. THOMAS CORMACK, Assistant Manager, representatives of the Irrawaddy Flotilla Co., Ltd., Rangoon.**

M-2587. *Mr. Cliff* : Where is the whole of your labour engaged ?—(*Mr. Henry*) : All our labour is taken on in Burma, principally in Rangoon.

M-2588. Do I understand correctly that you engage the certificated men and the serangs engage the crews ?—Roughly that is correct.

M-2589. Can you tell us the number of the certificated men, serangs, secunnies, drivers and tindals, and also the number of crews ?—Serangs 292 ; drivers and tindals 520 ; secunnies 319, and the crews roughly about 3,500.

M-2590. Can you give us the total number of vessels including the dumb barges and flats ?—615. About 250 vessels are under steam and the balance are flats and dumb barges.

M-2591. Have you got any idea of the number of crew offering for employment ?—In regard to certificated men we reckon that about 7.4 per cent. are seeking employment at the present time. In our memorandum we have given the figure as 5.3 per cent. but at the present time it is slightly more owing to slack trade and general depression.

M-2592. How did you arrive at that figure?—That is according to our books.

M-2593. That is the number on your registers?—Yes. I would like to explain that uncertified labour is not registered by us.

M-2594. With regard to certificated labour, can you give us the number of applicants offering for employment as distinct from the number on your books?—I am afraid I cannot.

M-2595. You cannot help the Commission with regard to figures of unemployment amongst the men who offer for work?—No.

M-2596. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : Does that 7.4 per cent. men who are on your register represent those who are anxious to get work, or does it merely represent those who have their names on the book although some of them are working elsewhere upcountry?—It represents the number who are anxious for work.

M-2597. It is a live register, and you have got 7½ per cent. roughly waiting for vacancies?—Yes.

M-2598. *Mr. Cliff* : I cannot gather from your memorandum the amount of regular employment which your men obtain with you in a year?—It is extremely difficult to say that because of them are engaged for the entire period of the year while others are engaged for 10 or 11 months only.

M-2599. What percentage are engaged for 12 months in the year?—I think 90 per cent. will be a fair figure.

M-2600. Do you provide any housing at all?—We provide a small house for our certificated people when they are out of a job. We do not provide any accommodation for others.

M-2601. *Mr. Cliff* : There is no house accommodation for crews who are returning on leave or who are being transferred?—(*Mr. Henry*) : No ; when they are going to their country they stay on board their steamer until they leave.

M-2602. Is there no need of temporary shelter for them here in Rangoon?—We have never thought it necessary to provide it.

M-2603. How is illness dealt with when it occurs on boards?—Sick men are sent to hospital. We subscribe to all the riverine station hospitals up and down the river. Any man who is ill is sent to hospital and treated.

M-2604. When you say he is sent to hospital, does that mean that he is accompanied to hospital?—If he has to be accompanied, yes.

M-2605. Can this Commission take it that where a man is taken ill on board and put on shore he does receive proper attention?—Yes.

M-2606. *The Chairman* : For your subscription is there a guarantee of proper treatment of your own servants?—No, I do not say that ; but they are treated, as far as we know, quite satisfactorily.

M-2607. *Col. Russell* : We have heard that in certain cases of illness men are put out on the river bank and you do not know where they go ; is that so?—I know of no such cases.

M-2608. *Mr. Cliff* : A man on the ship, on which we travelled said he had been sick and was put ashore at Mandalay ; that he had to wait there for 3 months before he could get back in your employment again ? —If he had reported to the agent at Mandalay, he would immediately have been sent back to Rangoon. If they wish to be sent to Rangoon we would always send them back.

M-2609. *The Chairman* : Is that generally known amongst your staff ?—I think so.

M-2610. *Mr. Cliff* : How do you deal with accidents ?—We adopt the terms of the Workmen's Compensation Act, although inland steamers of less than 100 tons register do not come under it. The Company voluntarily deals with its employees on those lines in the case of all accidents.

M-2611. *Mr. Clow* : Are any of your steamers more than 100 tons ? —Yes, the larger ones, but the greater number are not.

M-2612. *The Chairman* : I take it you would have no objection to the Act being extended to cover cases like yours ?—We should have no objection at all.

M-2613. *Mr. Cliff* : Do you pay wages on board ?—In the larger steamers, yes ; with regard to the smaller steamers if in Rangoon wages are paid in the godown office ; if at an outstation wages are paid by the Company's Agent.

M-2614. Who is responsible for payment ?—In the case of a large steamer the European commander and European engineer pay the men. In the case of the smaller creek steamers an office assistant pays the serang and the driver, and they distribute the money to the members of the crew.

M-2615. On the larger steamers does the commander pay each man direct ?—No, he pays the deck serang and the Engineer pays the engine serang, and they distribute it.

M-2616. Have you any record of the conditions of labour and rates of pay of the crews of dumb barges and flats ?

*The Chairman* : They come under the Company's control, do they ? —Yes.

M-2617. Would you put in a statement on that matter ?—Yes.

M-2618. *Mr. Cliff* : If the men desired to band together in a trade union organization, would that be welcomed or opposed by your company ? —It would not be opposed by this Company provided it was run on appropriate lines.

M-2619. By "appropriate lines" do you mean conforming to the Trade Union Act ?—Yes.

M-2620. So that there would be no opposition by your Company to a union working under the Trade Union Act ?—There would not.

M-2621. *Mr. Tyabji* : How do the wages of serangs range between the figures of Rs. 46-8-0 and Rs. 151-8-0 which you give ?—There is an annual increase of Rs. 5 if work is satisfactory. The serangs are graded.

M-2622. I think it would be useful to have a list showing how many men there are in each grade. I suggest there are far more in the Rs. 70

grade and practically none over that ?—It depends on the man's certificate ; if he does not hold a second class master's certificate, he cannot be put into the higher powered vessels and naturally he cannot be given as high pay as a man commanding such a vessel. A man's pay also depends upon his length of service.

*The Chairman* : I do not think that information would be useful.

M-2623. *Mr. Tyabji* : Are these serangs and drivers in permanent employment ?—Yes, that is to say, as far as the service allows.

M-2624. Have you contracts with certificated employees ?—The certificated men are given service books and are registered, while the un-certificated men are not. There is no contract in either case. The photographs of the registered men are put in a book for identification purposes.

M-2625. *The Chairman* : The registered men are treated as being on your permanent staff subject to employment being available ?—Yes.

M-2626. *Mr. Tyabji* : If you have no employment for one of these registered men, do you not put him ashore ?—At times when we have to reduce the number of vessels that are running it is unfortunately necessary to send some of our employees ashore.

M-2627. *The Chairman* : That is so in every country in the world ?—Yes.

M-2628. *Mr. Tyabji* : Is there not a boat which starts at 4 p.m., reaching its destination at 7 p.m. the next day ?—There is a creek steamer which leaves Rangoon at 6 p.m. and arrives at the destination at 3 p.m. the following day, I think ; and then the launch has a full day off.

M-2629. When the launch has a full day off in Rangoon, the crew do not get ashore but have to clean up and receive goods ?—For the best part of the day they are not employed ; they have to do a certain amount of cleaning.

M-2630. They are on call ?—On these runs in which there is night running we arrange to give the launch a clear day so that the crew may have a rest.

M-2631. *Mr. Clow* : Are the crew on duty from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. the next day ?—On this particular run the vessel is running from 6 p.m. to 3 p.m. the next day. The entire crew is not working all the time ; there is one serang in charge with two secunnies who take charge of the wheel in turns, so that there is no man continuously employed for 21 hours. A number of the crew are sleeping during that time. On certain Express services that we run at night for the convenience of the public it has to be done.

M-2632. *Mr. Tyabji* : Have you given orders for the reduction of the firemen tindal so that the hours of work are increased ?—(*Mr. Cormack*) No, in the case of two small launches plying outside Rangoon on very short runs, probably three hours in the morning and three hours in the afternoon, the engine tindal has been removed within the last month ; but these launches have such very short runs, only 6 to 8 hours per day, that this reduction is no hardship to the crew.

M-2633. With regard to riverine employment are all your launches registered with any Government department ?—Our larger vessels are

registered ; the smaller ones are not, but they have to come up annually for survey.

M-2634. Is there any Government report in which the number of people employed and the accidents in your service are mentioned ?—No, we make no return for our men afloat ; any accident we return through the Compensation Act Board.

M-2635. I think in 1929 in the compensation return there is only one accident with regard to your service ?—I could not say.

M-2636. *Mr. Tait* : Do you find that employees once engaged by your Company stay with you for a long period of years ?—Yes, we have many long service men. We have a man aged 73 who must have been with us for nearly 50 years.

M-2637. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Must a man work with you till he is 73 before he can retire ?—No ; he retired from the service a number of years ago, but returned because he liked the service so much.

M-2638. *Mr. Tait* : You say that suitable men are encouraged to get certificates to qualify themselves for promotion ; what do you do ?—(*Mr. Henry*) We coach them when they are going up for their examination ; we give them a bonus of Rs. 100 if they get through it ; we pay their fees for the examination ; if a man gets through his examination for second class master, he becomes entitled to an immediate increase of Rs. 10 in pay. We give him 2 months off to study if he wishes, and during that 2 months we pay him at the rate of Rs. 40 a month. I am speaking of serangs.

M-2639. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Do you do that for the secunnies to enable them to become serangs ?—No, I think the examination is less arduous.

M-2640. *Mr. Clow* : Are any regulations imposed as to the qualifications of a man to command any of your steamers ?—Yes.

M-2641. Is the certificate granted by you or is it one approved by Government ?—It is a Government certificate ; an applicant for that certificate must be over a certain age, have served a certain number of years and must pass an examination.

M-2642. In the case to which *Mr. Tyabji* referred of what appears to be a very long run of 23 hours, how many men on board would have certificates ?—The serang and both the secunnies.

M-2643. Are the men divided into watches in a case like that ?—There is no real watch system, but they relieve one another.

M-2644. Is there a double crew on board sufficient to man the ship twice over ?—To steer the ship.

M-2645. But are there twice as many as are necessary to man the ship ?—No ; but the crew during this period of the voyage have no work to do.

M-2646. When they come back how long are they off duty ?—From 6 a.m. until 6 p.m. the next afternoon.

M-2647. They are not on call at all during that period ?—They have to clean up their boat and so on ; for the greater part of the period they can rest.

M-2648. Supposing you want to discharge a man, do you give him a month's notice or what?—They are paid monthly and they have a month's notice.

*Mr. Tyabji* : I thought the witness just said that if there was no work for a man they would discharge him.

M-2649. *Mr. Clow* : Suppose a ship has to be laid up, do the men get a month's notice of that?—No, I am sorry I am wrong there; they do not.

M-2650. Do they get a day's notice?—Yes, or thereabouts.

M-2651. Is that clearly understood in the contract?—There is no contract.

M-2652. *The Chairman* : Do these men only know at the end of the trip that there will be no more work for them for a period?—There are occasions when that is so, but these reductions are not very frequent. (*Mr. Cormack*) It also requires a few days to lay up a steamer; a man is not paid off the moment he arrives. There is always a certain amount of work to be done if a vessel is to be laid up; this may extend to as much as a fortnight or three weeks in the larger steamers.

M-2653. *Mr. Clow* : What is the difficulty in the way of paying the men their wages themselves?—(*Mr. Henry*) The uncertificated men are not registered with us and we really do not know them. At one time we tried to register all our uncertificated employees; we tried to give them all a service book and take finger prints and a photograph. We endeavoured to introduce this and it almost led to a strike; the crews did not wish to do this. Whether they thought we had some ulterior motive I do not know, but we had to give it up.

M-2654. Supposing you had a 6 months' agreement as in the case of sea-going ships?—A sea-going ship makes a call perhaps once in one or two months, while our vessels make several calls each day. We find a man will join a steamer at Rangoon and leave it at Prome, his place being taken by some one else there without our knowledge. If it suits the men it suits us too.

M-2655. It suits you to have the men constantly changing at ports?—We have no registration of these men and we are not able to prevent their changing. Conditions are different in the low water season from what they are in the high water season; the same vessel will carry twice as much cargo in the high water season. Our terms of service are therefore not regular; we could not give a man a contract. In the low water season we require more vessels to carry the same quantity of cargo as in the high water season on account of the draught of the river; there are more employees in the low water season than in the high water season.

M-2656. Do you not think it would be practicable to give these men more regularity and security of employment?—Under the conditions just explained this would not be practicable. No desire on the part of the men for a 6 months' contract has ever been expressed.

M-2657. But do you not see from the point of labour that the existing conditions can hardly be regarded as satisfactory?—I do not think that has ever been represented to us by the men.

M-2658. *The Chairman* : Because they are not vocal as a body ?—  
On the contrary, we receive many petitions.

M-2659. *Mr. Clow* : In a sense, under the present system, they are not your employees ?—We pay them.

M-2660. I am referring to the uncertificated men ; you do not pay them ?—(*Mr. Henry*) It is our money that pays them, anyway.

M-2661. Do you not think it is an unsatisfactory system to leave the choosing and appointment to men who are poorly paid as are some of these serangs and are therefore open to many temptations ?—The system has worked satisfactorily.

M-2662. For whom ?—For both the serangs and the crews.

M-2663. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Certain men can take leave after 2 years' service ; do you insist on their taking leave ?—Yes ; they can take up to 8 months. This leave applies only to certificated men.

M-2664. So far as uncertificated employees are concerned, you do not know that they exist ?—We have not got them registered for the reason previously given.

M-2665. Who sees that there is the full complement of men on each vessel ?—The Marine Superintendent and Fleet Engineers inspect and we have agents up and down the river who also inspect.

M-2666. Do your vessels ever work with a man or two short ?—No, there is no chance of that ; vessels leaving Rangoon are very carefully checked, crews are mustered. At out-stations the Company's agents look after the crews and check them.

M-2667. If that is so, what objection is there to putting their names in your books ?—We did this up to 3 or 4 years ago but we found that on pay day the men whose names were in the pay book could not be produced when their names were called and it was merely a waste of time.

M-2668. If there is any difficulty about registering the men in your books, you could at least register each job in your books ?—There is no objection to that ; but we cannot identify the individual men. A vessel leaves Rangoon in the morning with 4 lascars on board and when it stops for the night the same four lascars will probably be on board ; but when that vessel leaves next morning there may be four different lascars on board.

M-2669. *Cr. Clow* : The names of these men are actually shown on the pay register on board, are they not ?—(*Mr. Cormack*) The vessel's pay book has the names in it ; the names of the serangs and secunnies are correct, but I am afraid the names of the lascars are fictitious ; they are not the names of the men who are actually in the posts at the time.

M-2670. *Mr. Ahmed* : The Captain appoints the serang at his own entire discretion, appointing whomever he likes ; is not that so ?—(*Mr. Henry*) Yes.

M-2671. Any number of serangs apply for the job ?—Yes.

M-2672. And the serang in turn selects his men ?—Yes.

*The Chairman* : Yes, that is all common knowledge.

M-2673. *Mr. Ahmed* : Therefore as far as the appointment goes the Captain can appoint anyone ?—If a man appointed by the serang does not carry out his work, the Captain orders the serang to discharge the man and get another.

M-2674. But the Captain can appoint a serang according to his own discretion for any consideration ?—He appoints the serang, yes.

M-2675. And also the crews who are appointed by the serangs can be appointed at the discretion of the serangs for any consideration that they like ?—Yes, the serang appoints the crew but of course they must be efficient in order to maintain their jobs.

M-2676. But there are any number of efficient crews available here and all over India ; is not that so ?

*The Chairman* : I am not quite sure whether your so-called question is a suggestion or not. Are you suggesting there is a bribe taken by the Captain ?

*Mr. Ahmed* : Mr. Clow's report is with us and it is printed.

*Mr. Clow* : There is not a word of that.

*The Chairman* : If you make a suggestion, put it straight and let us all understand what it is ; do not let us have it, as it were, round the corner. Is that your suggestion ?

*Mr. Ahmed* : Yes.

*The Chairman* : You wish to ask the witnesses : do the Captains take a consideration for the engagement of serangs ?

*Mr. Ahmed* : Do you know about it ?—I do not know and I should be very surprised to hear that such a practice existed.

M-2677. *The Chairman* : Do you know that serangs in their turn take considerations from the men ?—I do not know.

M-2678. Would it come to your knowledge if it took place to any extent ?—It might or it might not.

M-2679. *Mr. Ahmed* : Regarding hours of work you say " Conditions under which services are conducted make it difficult to give a definite daily period of work or to define ' working hours ' . " Do you count the number of hours they have to work in a fog ?—The position we wish to make clear is that a steamer may have certain hours of running to do in a day, but if she gets into a very bad channel or experience a fog which may detain her, we could not possibly lay down that she would only run from 6 in the morning till 6 at night, because she might be in difficulties in a very bad channel and might have to run till midnight.

M-2680. If there are fogs, tides, channels or groundings, they have to work overtime. What is the average number of hours they have to work ?—On the average 9 hours a day.

M-2681. Some of your crews say that they work not only 10 to 12 hours, but they have to clean the engine, which takes a long time. Can it not be said that they work for 16 hours a day ?—(*Mr. Cormack*) That is not in accordance with our experience.

M-2682. *Col. Russell* : Is it the case that you turn around so quickly sometimes that the cleaning of the engines has to be done before they cool down ?—(*Mr. Henry*) There may be an occasional case like that ; I do not say it does not happen.

M-2683. *Mr. Ahmed* : On the question of wages, you say “ In addition to the above, Serangs on certain services or work draw commission.” What is that commission ?—The maximum commission that a Serang can draw in addition to his pay is Rs. 75.

M-2684. Do they get it from the crews or from you ?—They get it from us.

(The witnesses withdrew.)

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**BURMA.****Twelfth Meeting.****RANGOON.***-Friday, 7th November 1930.***PRESENT :**The Rt. Hon'ble J. H. WHITLEY (*Chairman*).

Sir VICTOR SASSOON, Bart.

Sir ALEXANDER MURRAY, Kt., C.B.E.

Mr. A. G. CLOW, C.I.E., I.C.S.

Mr. KABIR-UD-DIN AHMED,  
Bar-at-Law.

Mr. JOHN CLIFF.

Lt.-Col. A. J. H. RUSSELL, C.B.E.,  
I.M.S. (*Medical Assessor*).

Mr. J. TAIT.

Mr. S. A. S. TYABJI.

U HLA BU.

} *Assistant Commissioners.*Mrs. TE TE LUCE (*Lady Assessor*).

Mr. S. LALL, I.C.S.

Mr. A. DIBDIN.

} *Joint Secretaries.*

**U BA SI**, Bar-at-Law, and **U TUN WE**, Representatives of the Burmese Labour Bureau.

M-2685. *The Chairman* : The Burmese Labour Bureau came into existence in June of the present year, following on the shipping troubles which took place in May ?—(*U Ba Si*)—Yes.

M-2686. I take it that the aim of your Bureau, put generally, is to promote the interests of Burmese unskilled labour, to find openings for them, and also to guide them to places where there are openings for their labour ?—Quite so.

M-2687. You have devoted yourself, in the first instance, only to the question of shipping labour. Am I right that you intend your Bureau to be a permanent organization if possible, that will promote the interests of Burmese unskilled labour in other industries besides that of shipping ?—Yes.

M-2688. With regard to the fifty-fifty agreement, we have been told by other witnesses that the system adopted by those who are trying to work the agreement is one of turn and turn about by ships, one ship worked by Indian labour and the other by Burman labour. I understand you have registered some thousands of workers. Taking the ships that

are being worked by Burman labour, does your Bureau take part in the selection of the men who are to work on that system? In what way are they being selected to take their places on the turn and turn about?—(*U Tun We*): The Burmese Labour Bureau was constituted on the 12th of June. Immediately after its constitution, a register was opened calling for Burmese labourers who wanted to work on shipping labour. A considerable number came forward. We wrote to the shipping agents and stevedores in Rangoon intimating to them that this Bureau has been formed to look after the interests of Burmese labour, to make them efficient, so that we might serve the stevedores as well. We requested that Burmese labourers should be recruited from those who have registered their names with us, but with the exception of Captain Rushall, no other stevedores have recruited through us; they have recruited Burmese labour on their own responsibility.

M-2689. Did you offer to provide the *maistries* or *gaungs*?—We offered to provide the *gaungs* as well as the coolies. Even in the case of Captain Rushall we have not come to a definite settlement. Our proposal was that the work of supplying labourers and the postings should be entrusted to the Burmese Labour Bureau, but he would not agree to our suggestion to give us the postings. But he does take only the Burmese labourers who have registered their names with us. Further than that the Bureau has not been successful to do anything.

M-2690. He maintains his own right of selection out of the names on your register?—Yes.

M-2691. Some people have said, as you know, that the Burman will not stick for any length of time to the strenuous and persistent labour demanded of a cooly. How does your experience agree with that, or does it deny that?—Captain Rushall employed 16 *gaungs*; 2 out of them were discharged and 14 still remain. The number of coolies has changed to a little extent. Those of the Burmese labourers who work for Captain Rushall have persisted in their work.

M-2692. Out of 16 *gaungs* 14 have proved satisfactory and are still being employed?—Yes. They are being employed since the last riot.

M-2693. On the question of restriction of Indian immigration you do not go further than merely to say that you advocate the restriction of Indian immigration: have you had time to consider that proposal in more detail?—No, we have not had time to consider this question in more detail.

M-2694. You have no actual practical proposals that you would like to put before the Commission on that subject?—We have none.

M-2695. When you talk of restriction on immigration do you mean restriction in numbers?—We mean the number of coolies coming into Burma from India.

M-2696. That is to say, no cooly should be allowed to come into Burma from India without some sort of a permit?—That is the idea.

M-2697. It would mean some kind of control, whether by employers or by Government, on the other side before they depart?—I should think that arrangement on the other side would be more convenient.

M-2698. Are you familiar with the system that applies in the case of Ceylon?—No; we have a very vague idea about it.

M-2699. You quite see no doubt that as long as Burma is a province of India it would be a difficult thing to suggest that free movement from one province to another should be prohibited?—That is so, because the question of inter-provincial migration rests with the Government of India; the Burma Government have no powers in that respect.

M-2700. Supposing the Government of India were to agree to a restriction of emigration from India to Burma, there might be a similar demand from Bombay to Madras or Bombay to Bengal: naturally the Government of India would have to treat all these provinces alike?—It may be so; but in Burma the question of Burmese labour has become very acute, and we have to do something about it.

M-2701. Of the present number of Indian immigrants of the coolie class, how many in your estimate can be replaced by Burmese labour? Would you put it at 50,000 or 100,000?—It is very difficult for us to give a definite number. There are a good many Burmese labourers available now, and if any responsible employers or Government come forward and find out what is the number of Burmans available, immigration to that extent should be limited. The question of unemployment in Burma should be gone through first.

M-2702. Your point is that Government should estimate how many Burmese labourers there are who are willing and competent to take the places of Indian labourers, and having done that the quota of Indian immigrants should be limited in accordance with that?—Yes.

M-2703. On the question of housing, I see that you advocate a building policy by the Rangoon Development Trust. May I take it that your views generally are those that are embodied in the draft Bill proposed to be introduced in the next session of your Legislative Council?—I believe it has not been published yet. We have not seen it.

M-2704. Perhaps it is a matter of common knowledge that the additional Re. 1 tax on the departing Indian emigrant and the expanding of the duties of the Development Trust to undertake building for housing purposes are the principles of the Bill. You suggest that the tax should be increased to Rs. 3 and that part of the amount so realized should be utilized for a building loan. That means that part of the present revenue can be taken for building purposes in addition to the new tax of Re. 1?—Yes, the whole including the original tax of Rs. 2.

M-2705. You give us some figures of the number of Burmese and Telugu labourers in June and July of the present year. You show that the number of Burmese employed is  $41\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. for July as compared with  $39\frac{1}{4}$  per cent. for June, a slight increase. But I observe that the total number of Burmese and Telugu labourers is very much down in July to what it was in June; but the proportion of Burmese labour has slightly increased; and the figures for August and September are not at present available?—We have received a letter from the Conciliation Board yesterday, of which we will let the Commission have a copy. For August we find it is  $33\text{-}1\frac{1}{3}$  per cent. of the whole worked by Burmans and  $66\text{-}2\frac{2}{3}$  per cent. worked by Indians. For the month of September it was almost 50 per cent. for each.

M-2706. *Mr. Clow* : Is the Conciliation Board still in existence ?—I think it is still in existence, because we received a letter from the Chairman yesterday.

M-2707. Who signed the letter ?—Mr. I. G. Lloyd.

M-2708. As chairman of the Board ?—Yes, as chairman of the Board.

M-2709. *Sir Alexander Murray* : You made a suggestion to the Chairman that the Government of Burma might take stock of the number of Burman labourers that were available, and then regulate the importation from India accordingly. Could you suggest the machinery by which that could be done ?—If Government simply notifies that they want to know the number of people who do not have any substantial means of living on account of want of work, you will have a good many coming forward to explain their cases.

M-2710. How many would that be ?—It is difficult to say. My idea is that you will get a very big number.

M-2711. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : Prepared to be sweepers !—Yes even as " *maiters* ". But if you ask these people what sort of work they want, they will naturally prefer some other kind of work. Some will work even as sweepers. There are Burmese sweepers in the Mandalay municipality.

M-2712. *Sir Alexander Murray* : When you organized your Bureau in June, in the course of 9 days you registered 28,000 workers. How many names are there on your books in the month of November ?—We stopped registration on the 17th of June, because we could not provide them with work. It was no use calling for registration when there was no work.

M-2713. In 9 days you registered in Rangoon 28,000 : how many would the Government register all over Burma in a few months ?—It is impossible for me to give you the figure.

M-2714. You said you had 400 gaungs registered ; evidently you are employing only 16 ?—Yes, because we can provide only 16 gaungs with work from Captain Rushall. Other stevedores are employing their own gaungs, who have nothing to do with us.

M-2715. They are all Burmese ?—Yes.

M-2716. They are not registered with you ?—Not at all.

M-2717. Is there much difference in the cost of living between the Burmese labourer and the Indian labourer ?—There is. The Indian labourer would live on something like Rs. 16 to Rs. 17 per month ; the Burmese labourer would require Rs. 22-8-0 per month.

M-2718. If a living wage of Rs. 22-8-0 were prescribed for a Burmese labourer, how would you arrange for the employers to use Burmese labour, when they can get Indian labourers at a reduced wage ?—That is our point. We say this is Burma and there are a lot of Burman people who have no work ; they require living, but their employment costs a little more money while there are a lot of Indians in Burma who can work on any wages. We have to solve the problem one way or other. We cannot give you definite ideas ; we have made only general suggestions.

M-2719. *The Chairman* : The poverty of the districts in India from which the Indian labour comes ought not to be a measure of the standard for the Burmese labourer ?—Exactly.

M-2720. What is the size of the Burmese gang? Is it the same as the Indian gang?—There is one *maistry* with 20 coolies under him.

M-2721. He gets 2 annas per head per day as his commission?—Yes. That is Rs. 2-8-0 per day.

M-2722. That is in addition to Rs. 3?—Yes. He gets Rs. 5-8-0. We asked these *maistries* about the necessity of collecting 2 annas commission on each cooly, and their explanation was that these coolies did not get work constantly and that when there was no work for them the gaungs had to provide them with some means for their livelihood. We are not sure what actually is taking place.

M-2723. *Mr. Clow*: What work were the Burmese coolies now employed in loading and unloading doing before the strike?—They were doing odd jobs. They did not have any kind of definite work. Sometimes they would work as paddy field cultivators; sometimes they would come into the town of Rangoon and work as assistant carpenters and so on.

M-2724. Were they living in Rangoon before the strike?—Most of the coolies were living in Rangoon. Those who came from the districts during the strike have returned home.

M-2725. *Mr. Cliff*: Have the majority of the 28,000 registered men gone away?—I should not say the majority have gone to their homes. About 10 or 15 per cent. of them live near Rangoon in places like Dabein, and these have now gone back.

M-2726. *The Chairman*: So that your 28,000 does not represent what we might call a live register of unemployment?—They have registered with us but they do not all live in Rangoon.

M-2727. Have you taken any steps to re-examine your register?—We have had no time to do that.

M-2728. *Mr. Clow*: Are a good many of the men now employed the same as those who were employed as strike breakers?—Many are and many are not.

M-2729. Where do they live?—They live in suburbs like the Upper Pazundaung, Kyaukmyaung and so on, 2 or 3 miles from the river.

M-2730. How do they get to their work?—I think they come in by buses.

M-2731. Do you think that Rs. 22-8-0 a month is a living wage?—I only gave a rough idea; it is not the result of any investigation.

M-2732. Is it for a single man or for a family?—It is for a single man living in Rangoon. Outside Rangoon a man can live a little cheap.

M-2733. *Mr. Tait*: Who own the small rice and saw mills in Rangoon?—Many of them are owned by Burmans, some by Indians and Chinese.

M-2734. Why do they not employ Burmese labour?—Because they get cheap Indian labour. Like other employers they want to employ cheap labour.

M-2735. Should not the Burman offer himself as cheaply as the Indian?—Looked at from the employer's point of view alone, it may be

all right to say like that. But there are so many other things to be considered. For one thing his custom and mode of living is such that the Burman cannot live as thriftily as the Indian.

M-2736. Here is an official budget which says that the total expenditure on food for a Burmese family of 2.95 adults living in Bassein is Rs. 23-7-2, as against Rs. 22-5-8 for a Telugu family of 2.56 adults living in the same place. Do you think that a difference of Rs. 1-2-0 is very much?—With due deference to the authors of the budget I should say the figures in it are not as accurate and authoritative as they might be. They are prepared so very hurriedly for the Royal Commission on Labour. They have to be revised considerably.

M-2737. You know how difficult it is for Burma to sell its rice these days. If you increased the labour charges of the rice-milling industry, would not the industry be hard hit in the markets of the world?—There are so many other factors besides labour charges, and I think the rates will adjust themselves.

M-2738. Why do you say that the Irrawaddy Flotilla Company does not employ Burman crew when they employed thousands of Burmans during the last strike in 1926?—As I said before the Burmans have been employed only as strike breakers. As soon as the strike was settled they were discharged.

M-2739. Would you accept the statement of the Irrawaddy Flotilla Company that they were quite prepared to keep on the Burman crews even after the strike was settled, but that the Burman crews left the service of their own accord?—We would not accept that statement without scrutinizing the circumstances and conditions under which the offer was made. As far as we remember they were discharged.

M-2740. What grounds have you for saying that the Burman labourer would accept work in the conservancy department?—We had one responsible Burman witness before us the other day who said that Burmans would not accept work in the night staff of the conservancy department of the Rangoon Corporation. Rural life in Burma has been so arranged for a long time that people could easily do without latrines, conservancy and things like that. Even now in Upper Burma many villages do not have latrines. It may be surprising to some of you, gentlemen, but the fact is that Burmans have not had to do conservancy work till now. So they are slow and reluctant to take to it, unless they cannot help it. It is only recently owing to the development of urban life that necessity has arisen for conservancy. Owing to economic pressure Burmans are now taking to conservancy work also. Only they would prefer to be sweepers instead of scavengers, if they can do so.

M-2741. Your Bureau is in favour of selective employment in the meantime?—Yes, we cannot help doing that.

M-2742. *U Hla Bu* : Why is it that in the case of loading and unloading ships the Burman labour costs more than the Indian labour?—One reason is that the Burman has just now come on to this kind of job and it will take some time before he becomes efficient. But there are various other reasons or causes leading to unnecessary cost for Burman labour which are worth investigation by the stevedores and which can

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be removed at once. For one thing, the Burma labourers have to work hand in hand with Indian labourers. It often happens that cranemen, cargo boatmen and other foremen who are all Indians delay matters and obstruct the Burmese workmen. For instance, Captain Rushall's chief foreman who is to distribute the work and so on does not know a word of Burmese; and how can he give clear instructions to Burman labourers?—Again in the case of Telugu gangs there are *kamalis* who are experts in stacking and stowing. They are paid more than the ordinary labourers. But in the case of Burman labourers there are no *kamalis*; the labourers themselves have to do the work of the *kamalis*.

M-2743. *Mr. Tait*: Captain Rushall said that he had to put one gang *maistry* down in the hold when he was working with Burman labour and that he did not have to do it when he was working with Indian labour and that the cost of supervision was greater in the case of Burman labour?—Captain Rushall keeps one foreman for every hold in the case of Burman labourers, but one foreman for two hatches in the case of Telugu labourers. Whatever it might be, there is a natural fear in the mind of the stevedores that the Burmans are inefficient yet and that a ship will not be finished in time, unless a bigger number is employed. During my inspection I came across a few Burmese labourers sitting without doing any work after they had been posted. On enquiry I found they were reserved by the chief foreman.

M-2744. *U Hla Bu*: Out of the 28,000 unemployed on your register only 4,000 could get employment in the busy season and the 24,000 must remain unemployed. Suppose Government did its duty by the sons of the soil and adopted measures of protection and preference in order to improve the efficiency of the Burman labourers and enable them to compete with the foreign labourers and remove their unemployment, would you want to have such measures permanently for all time?—No, such protective measures would be required only for the transitional stage.

M-2745. *Mr. Tyabji*: Out of the 28,000 on your register how many are absolutely unemployed?—It is difficult to say.

M-2746. Does it not rather represent the number of men who earn less than Rs. 1-12-0 a day and who would like to earn that amount?

*The Chairman*: In your call for registration did you say that there was work available at Rs. 1-12-0 a day?—No. But the people knew that shipping labour was available at Rs. 1-12-0 and the work is not a regular one.

M-2747. In what cases does Indian labour undercut Burman labour?—Only the other day Mr. Tyabji's friend U Ba Hlaing was removing rice bags from I. F. wharf to Gyogon near Insein by motor lorry for which the Burman labourers quoted As. 4 a bag, whereas the Indian labourers carried it off for As. 2 a bag. This is only one instance, but I can give many instances where Indians undercut Burmese in many directions. Take bullock cart drivers in the districts for example. In that line the Burmese cannot enter at all on account of ruinous undercutting.

M-2748. Do not the Indian Agricultural employees get more than the Burman?—The Indian agricultural labourers are not employed all

through the year like "Sayin Hnas" a Burmese term for Burman agricultural labour; they are employed at particular times for particular work such as the transplanting and harvesting by contract. They cannot be considered as agricultural labourers at all.

M-2749. Do the saw mills and rice mills in Upper Burma pay more or less to Indian labour?—They pay less to Indian labour than to Burmese labour. But there are some places like the Shwebo district where Burmese labour can be had cheap and Indian labour cannot compete with Burmese labour.

M-2750. Is not the unemployment of Burmese labour largely a result of the unemployment of Burmese agricultural labour?—Somewhere about 40 years ago when Indian labour began to pour into Burma, the Burmese agricultural labour found occupation in bringing waste lands under cultivation. Now that there are no more waste lands which can be easily brought under cultivation, Burmese labour is unemployed.

M-2751. Is not unemployment among Burmese labour largely a result of the fall in price of paddy in recent years, especially since 1928?—Our point is that there has been unemployment to a considerable extent for a long time before 1928, but the people did not trouble themselves so long as there was no such acute distress as exists at present. The Burmese are a very charitable people and they helped each other and relieved the distress to a considerable extent. It is now impossible. The recent fall in the paddy price is only one of the many factors which have been steadily working to cause Burmese unemployment.

M-2752. Could we not seek a solution of this unemployment in the direction of bringing more waste lands under cultivation? It is said that there are millions of acres of such lands?—Waste lands which can be easily brought under cultivation have all been brought under cultivation. What remains cannot be turned into paddy lands without immense capital and machinery, which the Americans alone can do.

M-2753. Is it your opinion that in future for the betterment of the country the agricultural side should be improved in order that it may absorb a good deal of unemployed men, or that the men should enter the industrial field?—The Burmese have now learnt that they should also go into the industrial field.

M-2754. If that is so, naturally the agricultural extension would be reduced to a certain extent?—May be to a very little extent.

M-2755. You suggest a minimum wage for Burmese labour. Would you apply that to Indians also?—That is a matter which should be decided by Government and the employers and Indian labourers.

M-2756. Would you keep two standards, one for Burmese and another for Indians?—Personally I would not. The standard rate, according to our memorandum, is meant only for Burmese labour, but before Indian labour can be absolutely eliminated they should be given the same standard as the Burmese.

M-2757. Do you think that Indian labour would be required in future for any length of time?—They have got a monopoly now.

M-2758. That monopoly can be broken?—You cannot do it by a stroke of the pen. It is not possible to replace them all at once; it will take some time.

M-2759. If you have Indian labourers in Burma I take it that you would like to give them a position in the country which would be better than what it has been till now ?—Yes. There is no doubt that we are in sympathy with the Indian Labourers.

M-2760. *Mr. Cliff* : Would I be right in saying that a suitable motto of the Burmese Labour Bureau is Burma for the Burmese ?—That is a motto used by politicians. I think it is a natural desire on the part of Burmans that they should get all the available work in Burma when they get no work elsewhere.

M-2761. I am only asking whether the real object of the Burmese Labour Bureau is to secure Burma for Burmans ?—If your question is whether all the works in Burma should be manned by Burmese labour then the answer is yes.

M-2762. As I understand it, there are about 500 or 600 Burmese labourers employed by stevedores at the moment. Are all those 500 or 600 employed through the agency of your Bureau ?—No. Only 14 gangs of 20 each were employed through the Bureau.

M-2763. Can you tell me how many Burmese labourers were employed during the strike ?—We have no definite figure but certainly the number is larger than the one at present.

M-2764. You register a very large number of Burmese labourers for stevedoring work. Has it been made known to the people whom you register that there is not the slightest possibility of more men being employed on this work ?—Yes, we have made known to them that there is no use in registering their names any more as there is no work for them.

M-2765. Do I understand that you intend your organization to be a permanent one ?—This Bureau at present is manned by public spirited gentlemen who are public leaders.

M-2766. Are they self-appointed ?—At the request of the gaungs that a certain number of Burmese leaders should constitute a Bureau which could look after the interests of the labourers the present Bureau was constituted. The names of the leaders were given by the gaungs themselves. The present committee is only a provisional one till a committee is formally appointed during the coming busy season.

M-2767. Had these gaungs been previously employed in this kind of work ; had they any experience ?—No. They worked during the strike and they learnt it very soon.

M-2768. I want to know whether it is intended that this organization should be permanent one ?—Yes, that is our idea.

M-2769. If it is to be permanent organization, is it intended that it should be an industrial organization, *i.e.*, a trade union ?—We have not definitely thought over the matter with regard to making the present Bureau a trade union. At present it is not a trade union. I think only in time to come a trade union will come into existence.

M-2770. You said that it is the purpose of the Bureau to make these labourers efficient. How do you propose to make them efficient ?—We have a set of rules for the gaungs to follow. (*A copy was handed in*).

M-2771. It is the gaungs whom you rely on to make the labourers efficient ?—Yes, we have got to depend on gaungs who would see that they get good men.

M-2772. So the real training is while they are actually working ?—  
Yes.

M-2773. Do municipalities in this country employ a great number of Burmese labour ?—We see Burmese employed in Mandalay but in Rangoon it is different.

M-2774. Are there any complaints about their standard of work ?—Burmans have never been employed. How can there be any complaints against their standard of work if they have not been given a trial ?

M-2775. *Mr. Ahmed* : I gather from your memorandum that as a result of the strike an agreement was arrived at between the stevedores and Telugu labourers and that this was not made known to the Burmese who had been taken in during the strike period. I suppose the stevedores did this because they wanted to get rid of the Burmese labour which was being paid at Rs. 2 a day and engage Telugu labour at Rs. 1-12-0 a day ?—We do not mean to suggest that in our memorandum.

M-2776. I take it that as a result of this there was a clash between the Burmese and the Telugus ?—The cause of the strike and the riot you will find in the report of the Riots Enquiry Committee. We know more than what is contained therein but we are not prepared to express it here.

M-2777. May I know how many were killed during the riots ?—I should refer you again to the report.

M-2778. Since the strike, the stevedores are employing Burmese labour as well ?—Yes.

M-2779. As there is unemployment everywhere there is a keen competition for securing jobs both by Burmese and Indian coolies ?—That is so.

M-2780. You say that unemployment of Burmans is caused mainly by exploitation of labour, i.e., by importing here Indian labour. Will you amplify that statement ?—That paragraph deals with the general unemployment ; it does not deal particularly with the shipping labour. There were Burmese labourers working in the port of Moulmein some years ago. When there was a big famine in India a number of Indians came to Burma and offered themselves to work at any rate which resulted in the displacement of Burmese labour by Indian labour at the Moulmein port. We have used the word ' importing ' advisedly just to show how Indians commenced to capture the field. Of course, there is no necessity now for importing any Indians because there are so many available in Burma.

M-2781. With regard to housing you say that Indian coolies live more like animals than human beings. I suppose what you mean is that they crowd themselves in a very small room ?—Yes.

M-2782. I take it that your view is that they live in a most miserable condition ?—Yes.

M-2783. Who is responsible for that, may I know ?—The *maistry*.

M-2784. The *maistry* makes profit, I suppose ?—Yes.

M-2784A. Do the employers know the condition under which the labour lives ?—I think they know because the Health Enquiry Committee went into that matter in detail.

M-2785. Does the Chief Inspector of Factories know ?—I think he has nothing to do with housing.

M-2786. Does the municipality know ?—Yes, perfectly well.

M-2787. Your opinion is that it is absolutely necessary that the present housing condition should be improved ?—Yes.

M-2788. Do these labourers get any pension or gratuity ?—No.

M-2789. Do they get any holidays with pay ?—Not that we are aware of.

M-2790. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : I understand that about 10,000 stevedore coolies are needed at the peak of the demand in the busy season. Are you restricting your efforts merely to stevedore coolies, or are you trying to find openings in other industries for Burmese labourers ?—Our main attention is directed towards shipping labour, but in other spheres of work we also try.

M-2791. You would not be able to deal with the unemployment problem, I take it, if your efforts were directed only towards securing your full share of these 10,000 places ?—We have only made a start, and it is very difficult to make a definite statement at this stage.

M-2792. But you appear to be concentrating on the stevedore coolie class ?—Because that was where we started.

M-2793. At the present moment what are you doing ; are you still concentrating on that, or are you trying to widen your activities ?—We are trying to widen our activities. For instance, at present we have a demand from one of the employers to supply him 1,000 Burmese labourers for some special type of work.

M-2794. Have you got different registers for registering different types of labour so that when an employer says " I want so many men for my rice mill " you will be able to pick the right type of men ?—We do not maintain different registers. We propose to do it in time to come.

M-2795. You intend dividing up the applicants under different heads, showing what experience they have ?—Yes.

M-2796. *The Chairman* : In your attempts to find more scope for the employment of Burmese labour have you approached, in the first instance, the Burmese employers ?—Yes ; in some places we were successful while in some others we are not, but are still trying to persuade them to employ Burmans.

M-2797. You have hopes that Burman employers themselves will give a lead ?—They should.

M-2798. At any rate they have not the language difficulty of which you spoke ?—No. As I said, Indian labour is cheaper than the Burmese, and naturally the Burmese employers also want to employ cheap labour. But we are inducing them to take more Burmese labour and thus help their own countrymen who for want of work are compelled to go to jails.

M-2799. To some extent you are a missionary body as well as a labour bureau ?—Yes, something like that.

(The witnesses withdrew.)

Mr. THAYER (one of the proprietors), and Mr. MANI IYER (Head Clerk), of Messrs. Thayer Bros., Labour Contractors, Rangoon.

M-2800. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Please tell us how long this contractor has been in this country ?—(*Mr. Mani Iyer*) : 25 years.

M-2801. What has been his experience as a contractor ?—He is a labour supplier to some of the rice mills here ; he also supplies coolies for discharging salt and also coal coolies ; he is also an employer of agricultural labour.

M-2802. At the present moment he is the contractor to the Port Commissioners ?—Yes.

M-2803. He is also a contractor to one or two of the rice mills ?—Yes.

M-2804. Which ones ?—Bulloch's Lower Pazundaung rice mill.

M-2805. He is also a boat owner ?—Yes.

M-2806. How many boats does he own ?—He has about 100 cargo boats.

M-2807. He also owns rice lands ?—Yes.

M-2808. How much would that be ?—About 8,000—10,000 acres.

M-2809. When did he become the contractor at the docks ?—On the 1st of July 1929.

M-2810. I understand that he works with a regular number of gangs ?—Yes. We have 16 gangs.

How many men are there in each gang ?—15 ; that is, one *maistry* and 14 coolies.

M-2811. Are all these 240 men on your books ?—Yes.

M-2812. Who are the others who are on the books besides these 240 men ?—We have an accountant, a cashier, gunners, sirdar, *maistries*, *sircars* and tally clerks.

M-2813. All these have to be paid out of the contract that he has with the Port Commissioners ?—Yes.

M-2814. What does he pay to the gang *maistry* ?—Rs. 43 a month.

M-2815. What does he pay to the coolies ?—Rs. 37 a month. They are all permanent coolies, and we have one uniform rate of Rs. 37.

M-2816. Do these coolies work two shifts or only one ?—We have divided our 16 gangs into two shifts ; 9 work by day and 7 by night.

M-2817. Do they work on Sundays ?—Yes.

M-2818. Do you give them a weekly rest day ?—Generally they get one day off once a fortnight.

M-2819. Over and above these 16 gangs that he has on his books how does he provide the surplus labour when there is pressure at the docks ?—We get casual labour.

M-2820. How do you do that ?—There are some experienced *maistries* in the wharf and we requisition their services.

M-2821. Have you a list of them ?—Yes.

M-2822. How many will there be ?—About 60 gangs.

M-2823. When you want to take extra men, do you take these *maistries* in rotation ?—Yes. The wharf clerk informs me daily as to the number of gangs he requires and from the list we maintain in our office I arrange to make an even distribution of work amongst these *maistries*.

M-2824. If you have 60 extra *maistries* on your books, can you tell me how many shifts of employment you give each of them ?—It would average about 20 days per month annually ; during the busy season they will be employed throughout the month.

M-2825. Could you make an abstract from your books of the number of days to show how you get the average of 20 days per month ?—Yes.

M-2826. What do you pay for the casual labour ?—The *maistry* gets Rs. 3-8-0 and the coolies Re. 1-12-0.

M-2827. How many are there in a gang ?—Usually 14 men, though it may be 5 or 10 if we have a light cargo to work.

M-2828. We have been told that often the *maistry* draws pay for himself and 14 men though he has actually only had 13 men ?—That is not the system with us. The *maistry* and coolies are paid separately individually. For the casual labour we have to hand the pay to the *maistry*.

M-2829. Are you quite sure the *maistry* does not take from the casual labour some extra money ?—No, he cannot take it because we have checks there ; there are the clerks moving about in the wharf. We tell the coolie definitely he is not to pay anybody.

M-2830. Do you have in your books the names of the gang leader, the *maistry*, and the individual workers in your books ?—Yes.

M-2831. You pay the gang *maistry* Rs. 43 and you pay the individual workers Rs. 37 each ?—Yes, individually we pay it.

M-2832. When it is casual labour, how do you know the gang *maistry* has the proper number of workers ?—We keep a tally and there is a special clerk deputed to that. I can send for the book.

M-2833. If you have a spare one you can send it in to show how it is done ?—Yes.

M-2834. You started on the 1st July, 1929 ?—Yes.

M-2835. We have been told that the work in this port is very seasonal ?—Yes.

M-2836. That is true as regards rice ?—Yes.

M-2837. You are paid by the ton, are you ?—Yes.

M-2838. I do not want to know what you were paid, but I would like a statement of the number of tons you handled and charged to the Port Commissioners in the months of July, August, September, right up-to-date ?—You can get that in the administration report of the Port Commissioners ; they give us a tonnage list.

M-2839. You do not handle rice and timber ?—We do not generally but sometimes we do.

M-2840. Where do you get the labour you employ in the docks ?—It is all Telugu labour.

M-2841. Where do you recruit it ?—We have not recruited so far ; we took over the present labour from the previous contractor.

M-2842. You have not sent to India for that labour ?—No.

M-2843. Have you made any advances to your dock labourers ?—No ; generally we give them Rs. 10 or Rs. 15 as they may require it ; before they receive their salaries they may want to send money to India.

M-2844. Can you give us a note of the total amount you have advanced to your *maistry* and your dock labour ?—Yes.

M-2845. When you took over this labour had you to make advances ?—No. We pay on the 6th or 7th of the next month, so that in the middle of the month they may ask for Rs. 10 or Rs. 15.

M-2846. *The Chairman* : Those are really subs ; they are not long advances ?—That is so.

M-2847. They are all paid off on the next pay day ?—Yes. We have no long advances.

M-2848. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Where do you get your labour for the rice contract with Bullocks ?—From India. Sometimes our representatives go or people who have been working with us and are settled in India write to us asking whether we can accommodate some men. We recruit this labour because we want to bring the right type of men. It is seasonal work, but if we select the right type of men we can find them employment throughout the year.

M-2849. When do you bring over the labour ?—From December they will be gradually coming. First of all we will use them for our harvesting ; we have paddy fields ; after they have worked in the paddy fields we shall have work in the mill and they come back to the mill for about 6 months ; after that we have this coal work. We have boats and when we supply cargo boats we undertake to load it. That is the same type of labour as the rice labour. We have a special man ; we do not go in and recruit indiscriminately.

M-2850. He brings over labour from his own village ?—Yes. Since having got this Port Commissioners' labour contract we use them at the wharves. That is how we were saved during the strike. These are Tamils.

M-2851. In a way you are really an employment agency for dock labour, paddy field cultivation, rice mills, and loading and unloading boats ?—Yes.

M-2852. *The Chairman* : Owing to the wide spread nature of your business you are able to give this Tamil labour practically permanent labour all the year round ?—Yes.

M-2853. Do you have to make large advances to them in their country ?—No, we generally do not make large advances. Out of 100 men 20 might ask for advances of Rs. 50 or Rs. 100.

M-2854. They are not indebted to you through the whole period ?—No, they are never indebted to us.

M-2855. *Sir Alexander Murray* : We are told that when you make a contract for handling rice at the rice mill, you have to make a security deposit ?—Yes. With Bullochs we have about Rs. 3,000.

M-2856. Do you get an advance from Bullochs to enable you to make advances ?—Not necessarily. We get some advances also.

M-2857. You have first of all to give a deposit to the employer of Rs. 3,000 ; what do you get from the employer ?—We get Rs. 10,000 or Rs. 12,000 ; anything we need we can draw from them.

M-2858. How much did you draw from them last year ?—Last year we received about Rs. 7,500 advance.

M-2859. You make advances to your sub-*maistries* ?—Yes, Rs. 50 or Rs. 100 ; the maximum will be about Rs. 300 to a sub-*maistry*.

M-2860. What is the total amount of your advances at the present time outstanding in your books for rice coolies ?—Less than Rs. 5,000.

M-2861. In the middle of the season, when you have brought people over here, what will be the total amount of advances ?—In the middle of the season we do not generally make advances, because we pay them then and there ; we have not advanced more than Rs. 7,000.

M-2862. We are told that coolie bag carriers at the rice mill will not begin to work until they have got advances from the *maistries* ?—Sometimes they do ask for advances. So far as we are concerned, we have two *maistries* representing the bag carriers and we make a total advance of about Rs. 1,500 to the *maistries*.

M-2863. Do you know how much the *maistry* has to give to the bag carriers ?—Of that we have no idea.

M-2864. We are told that practically all the coolies are in debt to the *maistries* ?—We are not aware of it.

M-2865. Who pays the expenses of bringing the coolies over from India to here ?—We pay them generally.

M-2866. Do you recover that from them ?—Yes, in some cases we deduct. We have got a place in Madras and the coolies come there ; we get a telegram from our agent that so many men are waiting to come to Rangoon, if we can send them passages they can send them by the next boat ; so we remit the money.

M-2867. *The Chairman* : At the end of a year how many of these Tamil labourers still remain in debt to you for these advances ?—Generally they clear it off ; immediately on settling the account they may ask for another Rs. 50 ; they have to meet the expenses of marriages, funerals, etc.

M-2868. Do they clear up their advances in addition to sending money home to their country ?—Yes.

M-2869. So that you have no considerable long standing advances with the coolies ?—No.

M-2870. *Sir Alexander Murray* : I understand you are the manager for the dock contract ?—I am general manager ; I look after all the business. We do not employ local labour because if there is no work in any particular kind of employment, we cannot employ them elsewhere.

M-2871. As you move them about from the rice fields to the rice mills and from the rice mills to the docks, how do you house them ?—Here, so far as the mills are concerned, we have got houses ; the millowners have given us accommodation. When they go to the fields I put up sheds.

M-2872. *Mr. Cliff* : I understand that the men who are put in a permanent gang on the dock are paid Rs. 37 a month for a 30 days month ?—30 or 31 days.

M-2873. I understand your men who are employed casually work about 20 days per month ?—Yes.

M-2874. Is that throughout the year ?—Yes.

M-2875. What do you pay them ?—The *maistry* gets Rs. 3-12-0 and the coolie Re. 1-12-0.

M-2876. What advantage is it to a man in your employ to be a member of the permanent gang ?—He is paid whether there is work or no work ; it is a guarantee for him.

M-2877. You pay a man Rs. 37 for 30 days ?—Yes.

M-2878. If you employ a man 20 days does he not get Rs. 35 ?—It all depends on the number of men we employ.

M-2879. How often do you pay wages ?—Casual labour we pay weekly.

M-2880. Have you to make any advances in those cases ?—Generally we only make short advances.

M-2881. Do men come to you in the middle of the week and ask for advances ; I am speaking of men who are paid weekly ?—Not many.

M-2882. What happens if an accident occurs ?—If it is a minor injury we compensate them ; we give them leave with pay and we pay the medical charges.

M-2883. What arrangements are there for the removal of an injured man from the dock to a hospital ?—We have our own conveyance or we 'phone up for the municipal ambulance and send him to the hospital.

M-2883A. How many men have you in the average in any year ?—1,500 per annum.

M-2884. Are there women amongst this labour ?—Yes, there are women in the rice mills.

M-2885. What proportion of the 1,500 would be women ?—About 200 to 250.

M-2886. How long does the labourer stay here ?—To or three years. We bring over about 400 every year ; we bring men according to the demand.

M-2887. Are all your advances made to *maistries* ?—Yes, we deal with the *maistries* ; we have nothing to do with the men.

M-2888. I understand that in your highest month you advanced Rs. 7,000 ; among how many *maistries* is that divided ?—20 or 25.

M-2889. That is among 1,500 work people ?—Yes.

M-2890. Has there been much change in the personnel of the gangs ?—No. It was only after the riots that we had to introduce this Tamil labour.

M-2891. Labour is staying with you fairly permanently ?—Yes.

M-2892. Do you house your stevedore labour ?—No, we have not housed them ; we are now in consultation with the Port Commissioners with regard to acquiring land. They have got one or two sheds and we have asked them whether they could keep them for the use of the labour until such time as they can furnish some accommodation for the labour.

M-2893. Your submission is that the Port Commissioners ought to provide housing for labour which is engaged in the port ?—Yes.

M-2894. Are you making representations to that end ?—Yes, we have seen them. This contract only runs for two years ; we cannot invest money in putting up a big building.

M-2895. Does that mean that the contractor would be prepared to make a contribution to the Port Trust in respect of this ?—Yes.

M-2896. *The Chairman* : Are you suggesting it would be better to have a contract of a longer term ?—I think it would be better so that the labour contractor might house the labour properly.

M-2897. *Mr. Tait* : At the rice mills do you pay your bagging coolies more or less per day than you paid last year and the year before ?—We paid more last year ; the maximum has been Rs. 6 per head per day ; in some cases it was Rs. 2 or Rs. 3 more than last year.

M-2898. Up to last year you had a surcharge on all your bills, but last year the surcharge was cut out ?—Yes.

M-2899. Did the *maistry* himself suffer the loss of the whole surcharge ?—Yes.

M-2900. So that he did not take anything off the coolies ?—No, nothing.

M-2901. *Mr. Tyabji* : Do you think the shipping labour could be paid direct by the employers ?—Yes, it could be arranged. It can be done by issuing tokens daily to the men who have worked ; those tokens could then be presented at the office every week for payment. It would be rather difficult to enter their names in a book and pay them according to their names because there are so many men with the same name.

M-2902. *The Chairman* : Are you now speaking with reference to your permanent labour force ?—No ; we pay the permanent labour force monthly ; this is only with regard to the casual labour which we pay through the *maistry*. In the case of the permanent labour we pay the *maistry* and coolies individually. So far as we are concerned, the gang *maistry* is nothing but a supervisor.

M-2903. *Mr. Clow* : Does the *maistry* choose the men ?—He has got his men ; these people have a regular supply of men ; he does not move about daily collecting men.

M-2904. *Sir Alexander Murray* : He constitutes the gang ?—Yes.

M-2905. You tell the *maistry* you want so many men and he brings his gang ?—Yes.

M-2906. You have nothing to do with choosing the men ?—No ; but if the *maistry* brings a sickly man or a man who cannot work we ask the *maistry* to send him away.

M-2907. *The Chairman* : I understand that you are thinking of adopting the system of paying your casual labour direct. Do you think that

such a system might be made applicable to the dock labour generally and the stevedores ?—Yes.

M-2908. What do you think would be the advantages to the labourer of a system of that kind ?—As it is, very many people are told that the *maistry* is taking something from the cooly in spite of there being no proof for it. If this system is introduced, it will be the folly of the cooly if he pays anything to the *maistry*.

M-2909. If a cooly did give any *bakhsheesh*, it would be his own fault ?—Yes.

M-2910. It would not be taken before his wages reach him ?—No. Then he pays it willingly, and we cannot prevent it.

M-2911. Have you discussed this proposed change with your firm ?—Yes. Immediately after the strike, we were discussing about this.

M-2912. You will be becoming leaders in a system that will at any rate take away some of the allegations that are made against the present system ?—Yes.

M-2913. *Mr. Clow* : Would not the tokens be sold in the bazaars ?—We could have some private marks.

M-2914. *Mr. Tait* : Supposing a gang works on a job for half a day and they have to be sent to another *maistry* for the other part of the day, how would the tokens be given ?—They would have to be given two tokens for 2 half-days.

M-2915. *Mr. Clow* : I did not mean that the tokens would be copied and sold by the bazaar people. I meant that the tokens would be discounted in the bazaar by money-lenders buying them and then recovering the money from you. How would you overcome it ?—We can distinguish between a money-lender and a cooly. When we are substituting one gang for another, we can ask the first gang to go and get their wages. This applies only to dock labourers. It may be difficult with regard to rice mill coolies.

M-2916. You do not know all your employees ?—We know them as we have all their names written. We do not merely take down the name of the *maistry* and say he has brought so many men.

M-2917. *Sir Alexander Murray* : That is for your permanent labour ?—No. For casual labour also we take down the names of the men employed.

M-2918. *The Chairman* : We have been told that there may be ten men with the same name. That is the difficulty about writing down the names ?—During the slack season they could be paid even daily, as the day is finished ; the workers could be paid off the same evening. The night shift could be paid off the next morning.

M-2919. Have you gone so far as to put this suggestion of yours in writing ?—No. We have only discussed it.

M-2920. I take it that you yourself, as the originator of this suggestion, have only verbally discussed it with your own employers ?—Yes.

M-2921. Could you put your suggestions down in writing, and let us have it ?—Yes, I will do so.

M-2922. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : Are you sure that labour will welcome this ?—I have not consulted them, but I do not think they would object to it.

M-2923. *Sir Alexander Murray* : We were told that when the Burmese labourers began working here after the strike, they were going to the bazaar and selling for Rs. 1-6-0 their chits for Rs. 1-12-0 for a day's work. Do you know anything about it ?—I have no idea about it. We have not employed any Burmese labour.

(The witnesses withdrew.)

**Mr. H. L. NICHOLS, I.C.S., Revenue Secretary, Mr. B. W. SWITHINBANK, I.C.S., Secretary, Department of Local Self-Government, Mr. A. J. PAGE, I.C.S., Director of Statistics and Labour Commissioner, Lt.-Col. G. G. JOLLY, I.M.S., Director of Public Health, Mr. W. H. C. PRIDEAUX, Chief Inspector of Factories and Mr. L. A. HAVELOCK, Officiating Excise Commissioner, representatives of the Government of Burma.**

M-2924. *The Chairman* : Mr. Page, what is the scope of your duties ?—(*Mr. Page*). I am officially known now as Director of Statistics and Labour Commissioner. At the time when this memorandum was written I was styled Officer in charge of the Labour Statistics Bureau. The functions of the Officer in charge of the Labour Statistics Bureau are set out in the memorandum prepared for the Commission. Then I am also Registrar of Trades Unions, of which there is only one registered in this Province ; I am Commissioner for workmen's compensation for Rangoon district and for the two neighbouring districts of Insein and Hanthawaddy. I am also Protector of Immigrants and Emigrants, which is a Government of India appointment, with an Assistant Protector under me. A tenth of my pay is debited to the Government of India and they pay for the Assistant Protector.

M-2925. Strictly speaking, those duties only cover the transit of Indian labour ?—Yes.

M-2926. I take it your position as Labour Commissioner covers various other duties ?—Yes. Labour Commissioner is just the title used to cover all these various things, such as workmen's compensation, trades unions, and various matters which deal with labour. I am not a Labour Commissioner in the sense in which I believe they have a Labour Commissioner in Madras.

M-2927. What is your seniority as a Civil Servant ?—I am a senior Deputy Commissioner in rank. It just so happens that I occupy my present position ; it might be held by any one in the Commission.

M-2928. How far would you be able to speak to us on matters of policy of your Government ? Are you deputed to speak for them on questions of policy ?—I have received no instructions to that effect, but if any questions of policy are required, the Secretaries concerned can appear before you.

M-2929. With regard to housing of coolies, in Rangoon, should we take it that the present policy of your Government is summed up in

the draft Bill which we have had the privilege of seeing ?—That is actually the stage at which things have arrived at the present time. The draft Bill has just been drafted in the Revenue Secretary's office, and that is so far as it has gone at the present moment. It will now go to the Chairman of the Development Trust for his criticisms. He had not seen or heard of it officially until I told him on the morning that he appeared before you. The papers have now gone back to be sent to him for his criticism. After he has criticized it, it might of course be considerably altered. It is in an embryonic stage at the moment.

M-2930. May I take it that it is the intention that there should be some legislation on the matter of housing in the next session of the Council ?—Presumably it would come up then. On this point, if you would like any further information, the Revenue Secretary would be ready to appear before you.

M-2931. Do you know if the question of moving the jail outside Rangoon and the liberating of that space for the purposes of housing has ever been seriously considered ?—I believe there has been a talk about it for a good many years, but I cannot tell you anything more about it.

M-2932. Has it been recently considered ?—I do not think so. I know from the jail point of view it is a very undesirable site. I at one time was Secretary of the Jail Revising Board and had a lot of work to do in the Rangoon jail. We used to hear all sorts of things about cheroots and other things being thrown over the walls. From the point of view of jail discipline, it is not desirable to have the jail in the middle of a busy city. I think Government have recognized it all along, but I cannot tell you what Government's present position is with regard to it.

M-2933. On the question of housing, can you tell us anything as to the share of responsibility which lies with the provincial Government and the share that lies with the municipality ?—I am afraid I cannot tell you. I had better ask the Revenue Secretary to come here ; he is the person who deals with it.

M-2934. Do I take it that all that you wish to say to the Commission on the two urgent questions that have been canvassed here, namely, the *maistry* system and the question of possible restriction of Indian immigration, are contained in the Government memorandum ?—I would not say so altogether, because that memorandum was prepared about June 1929, and a lot of things have happened since then. Some of the facts are not up to date, namely, the figures for immigration, emigration, and so on.

M-2935. I take it that on the matter of policy whether there should be legislative interference with the *maistry* system, you have nothing to add to what is stated here ?—I do not think there is anything stated about policy ; it is just a general opinion.

M-2936. You describe certain of the evils which are alleged to result from the present system, but you do not go so far as to suggest any action ?—I have no authority to do so.

M-2937. The same thing applies, I take it, to the question of restriction of immigration ?—Of course that has assumed quite a different aspect since the question of separation has come forward, and something

will have to be done if that becomes an established fact, because Burma will cease to be a part of the Indian Empire, and the Indian Emigration Act will naturally operate against Burma.

M-2938. You have some fair sized plantations in Burma : would you tell us what they are ?—The rubber plantations are mostly in the Tenassarim Division of Burma, that is, on the coast, on the part which goes down to Malaya. There are some also further north of Rangoon, practically due east of Pegu on the opposite side of the Sittang river. There are also some south of Rangoon, in the Hanthawaddy district.

M-2939. Is Indian labour employed there, or Burman labour ?—Down in Tenassarim, I understand a very large proportion of the labour is Telugu and Oriya ; I do not know those plantations. Those which I have seen in this neighbourhood and across the Sittang employ a very large percentage of local Burmese labour.

M-2940. Is there any inspection of these plantations ?—Whose duty is it, or is it anybody's duty ?—I do not think it is anybody's duty.

M-2941. They just go on without inspection ?—Yes.

M-2942. Is there any kind of report to Government on conditions in the plantations ?—No.

M-2943. If I were to ask you for information regarding them, you would not be in a position to give it ?—I have only general knowledge. I have visited some of them quite unofficially, or perhaps as Deputy Commissioner of a district.

M-2944. Does the Deputy Commissioner not have any powers and duties of inspection ?—No, except as a Revenue Officer. Rubber plantations are held under lease from Government, and there are various conditions attached to these leases. If the price of rubber attains a very high figure, Government is entitled to a royalty on all rubber exported, but that has never been collected from the very beginning as the price has never been such as to entitle Government to this royalty. Apart from anything which is on the revenue side, I do not think the district officers would have anything to do with rubber plantations in the way of inspection.

M-2945. No duties at all ?—No.

M-2946. Col. Jolly, have you ever inspected these plantations ?—*(Col. Jolly)* I think I have inspected one or two. In each district the District Health Officer has wide powers of inspection, which would include the inspection of any plantations ; so that that would form part of his inspection work during an ordinary routine tour of inspection. That would be from the health point of view.

M-2947. He would not go into the question of wages and system of payment ?—No.

M-2948. *Mr. Cliff* : Does the Annual Report of the Director of Public Health contain any reference to these plantations ?—There is nothing of the kind in any annual report that I have been connected with since I came to Burma. We have not made any special paragraph about plantations, because it forms a very small part of the duties, and we have not had anything of sufficient importance to devote a special paragraph to it.

M-2949. *The Chairman* : Mr. Page, do not the Government statistics in your office show the number of plantations and the number of persons employed ?—(*Mr. Page*) : No ; we do not keep up any statistics of that sort.

M-2950. Not being industrial, it does not come within your purview ?—Presumably they do not come under any one's particular charge.

M-2951. Could you give me the roughest idea as to their size and importance ?—It would be very difficult to do so, because for example in recent years a good many estates were amalgamated under one company.

M-2952. You could not tell us whether the number of workers is 5,000, 50,000 or 500,000 ?—I could not. Very likely the Rubber Planters Association would be able to give you some sort of figures. At the present time, I suppose the answer would be practically nil, because they are almost closed down.

M-2953. Did your Government send our questionnaire to the Planters Association ?—Not that I am aware of. I cannot tell you whether it exists now. It was in existence at one time.

*Mr. Tait* : In any case, the information could be got from the estate agents in Rangoon, Messrs. Begbies.

M-2954. *The Chairman* : It is rather important that we should have this information.—I will get all the information I can for you, giving the numbers of estates which are alive.

M-2955. Can you give us the reason why Government does not take the advice of the advisory committee in the locating of liquor shops ?—I am afraid you would have to ask the Secretary concerned or the Excise Commissioner about it.

M-2956. Is the Burma Midwives and Nurses Amendment Act of 1927, which we understand forbids the employment of unqualified midwives, really an effective weapon ?—(*Col. Jolly*) : So far as I know, the prohibition of the working of unqualified midwives only applies to a very small area, I think only a part of Rangoon. This is really out of my Department. It is the concern of the Inspector General of Civil Hospitals.

M-2957. The statement that unqualified midwives are gradually dying out after the passing of that Act would hardly be correct ?—I have seen no signs of their dying out.

M-2958. Were you here when this Act was passed ?—Yes.

M-2959. What was the actual purpose of that Act ?—We have a number of Acts which were brought in as a matter of general policy, for adoption by different local bodies, or they can be applied section by section at the local Government's discretion.

M-2960. Surely, you cannot have a different law on a matter of this kind where we are now and another law a few feet away ?—The intention of this Act, so far as I recollect, is that we should not attempt to prohibit unqualified midwives from practising unless we are quite sure that we have a sufficient number of trained midwives to take their place

in any particular area. Therefore, the Act would be applied only bit by bit, where we were sure that we would give them something better in the place of the unqualified midwives.

M-2961. Have you now an adequate supply ?—Not in the country by any means. For Rangoon again, I have not the figures, nor have I looked them up, because that is the Medical Department's sphere but I should say that taking Rangoon as a whole we probably have not an adequate number yet. But in Rangoon a very large number of the births are attended to by the Dufferin Hospital and by the local Maternity and Child Welfare Society. I have a statement of the actual numbers of births in Rangoon town in the years 1925 to 1929 and of the number that are attended to by these two institutions. It is as follows :

Years.	Total No. of births.	Number confined at the Dufferin Hospital.	Number attended to by the S. P. I.W., Rangoon.	Remarks.
1925.. ..	6,480	938	737	....
1926.. ..	7,313	972	859	....
1927 .. ..	7,316	1,086	617	....
1928.. ..	7,426	1,306	696	....
1929 .. ..	8,265	1,647*	1,223†	* 1,459 live births. † No. confined at the Maternity Shelters of which 1,140 were live births.

Dufferin Hospital—No. of beds 120—Capacity 3,000.  
Maternity Shelters—No. of beds 52—Capacity 1,400.

M-2962. *Mr. Clow* : There is an entire absence of trade unions in Burma ?—(*Mr. Page*) : Yes ; there is only one registered so far.

M-2963. Can you suggest any explanation for that ?—There is one big association called the Burma Labour Association, which is said to have a membership of something like 5,000 to 7,000 people, mainly Chittagonians. They would never come forward and have themselves registered. I do not know whether they did not want to disclose their finances.

M-2964. What is the reason for the lack of organization as compared with the provinces of India ?—Is it due to the fact that the industrial workers are mainly immigrants ?—It may be partly that.

M-2965. As far as organization is concerned, would you agree that labour on the whole in this province is in a very weak position as compared with employers ?—Yes.

M-2966. You cannot suggest any measures for remedying that ?—It may be that labour in general has been very contented and has not felt the need for trades unions ; I only suggest that.

M-2967. Is that true of the present day ?—I would not say it is true of the present day, because recently the Government Press employees wished to form a trades union and put in an application for registration, and I told them that they could not do so, as Government had not framed any rules for dealing with Government servants' trades unions. I consulted Government first, and I was told that was correct, and up to date they have not been registered.

M-2968. Surely, if they comply with the rules under the Trades Unions Act, they are entitled to registration irrespective of the opinion of the executive Government ?—It may be so ; in that case, I made a mistake.

M-2969. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : Are you framing the rules ?—Government say they are going to do so.

M-2970. *The Chairman* : Rules for recognition in the case of Government servants' unions ?—Yes.

M-2971. That does not debar the rights of any one to form themselves into a trades union ?—This is a Government Press.

M-2972. *Mr. Clow* : Does the Government exercise much supervision over its own industrial establishment ?—I do not know.

M-2973. I notice that in the Press 62 per cent. of the employees are fined every year ; why is that ?—There was a strike in the Government Press at the beginning of the year, and I was eventually deputed to hold an enquiry into their grievances. That was one of the points that was put forward by them, and it worked out to a very small sum of about 8 annas per head per year.

M-2974. As Labour Commissioner would you not consider that continued pin-pricking of a large section of labour like that is unsatisfactory ?—A large proportion of them are piece-workers, and most of the fines are of a very petty nature, for losing their clocking in tickets, and failing to do this that and various other technical things.

M-2975. *The Chairman* : Would not you think that 60 per cent. of the persons being fined in a year pointed to some lack of management ?—The difficulty was to know whether it was 62 per cent. of the whole establishment, or whether the total number that were fined were the same people who had been keeping on appearing over and over again.

M-2976. Supposing it was only 10 per cent. of the whole establishment which appeared over and over again, why should you not get rid of them ?—We might do it, but there seems to be a lot of dissatisfaction in the Press.

M-2977. *Mr. Clow* : Suppose the local Government desire to consult labour on some proposal before the Legislative Council or the Legislative Assembly, what steps do they take ?—They consult people who are known to be interested in labour problems. There are members of Legislative Council who have fought their election as labour candidates—men like Mr. Pillai and Mr. Tyabji. There are also members who have been nominated to the Council to represent labour. For instance, Messrs. Venkataswami and Narayana Rao were nominated to represent labour. Government generally consult these people and consider their points of view.

M-2978. What is the constitutional position as regards the Shan States ?—They are directly administered by the Governor and not by the Governor-in-Council. The various Acts of the Local Government and the Government of India are extended to the Shan States as need arises.

M-2979. Have all the important labour Acts been extended to the Shan States ?—Yes.

M-2980. In the case of the Factories Act why have they been exempted from most of the important sections of the Act from the point of view of protection of labour ?—I think sections 22 and 27 are included in the exemptions ?—(Mr. *Prideaux*) Formerly the whole of the Act applied to the Shan States, but the Company there represented to the Governor that they should be exempted from certain sections of the Act and they were exempted.

M-2981. Was there any particular difficulty in applying those sections ?—I do not know. I was on leave when these sections were withdrawn.

M-2982. In the Government Memorandum, Mr. Page, you state that it would certainly be advantageous both to the employers and the labourers if the *maistries* or contractors could be dispensed with. What advantage would there be from the point of view of employers if the payment of labour through *maistries* was dispensed with ?—(Mr. *Page*). The employers could have direct touch with their labour.

M-2983. Do you think that it would involve employers on greater expense ?—I could not say that.

M-2984. Was there a proposal before the Local Government at one time to legislate regarding the control of the construction of factories ?—(Mr. *Prideaux*) There was a proposal which began with the regulation of the temperature in factories, but eventually it came to nothing.

M-2985. What is the arrangement by which the mines in Burma are inspected ?—Does the Chief Inspector of Mines depute an inspector from time to time to visit Burma ?—(Mr. *Nichols*). An inspector is deputed to visit the mines in Burma from time to time.

M-2986. Would there be sufficient work for a whole-time inspector ?—The work is not sufficient to justify the appointment of a whole-time inspector.

M-2987. As Protector of Immigrants have you any statutory powers of any kind ?—(Mr. *Page*). None whatever, except with regard to issuing certificates for skilled emigrants. Whenever any question arises such as the overcrowding of a ship and so on we simply report it to the Port Officer. It is his duty to order a prosecution or not.

M-2988. When once an emigrant has left the jetty you have no responsibility whatever in connection with him ?—No.

M-2989. Suppose an immigrant comes to you and says that he has been recruited under false pretences and that he is not getting the wage promised to him. Could you take any action ?—I have nothing to do with recruitment in India.

M-2990. *The Chairman* : The appointment arose out of the temporary situation when there was overcrowding of deck passengers and certain other serious circumstances ?—Yes.

M-2991. *Mr. Clow* : Do you agree with the view that the labour requirements of rice and saw mills can be met by local recruitment and that payment of advances can be avoided ?—Yes, I should think so.

M-2992. Do you exercise any supervision over the statistics given by the factories ?—No.

M-2993. We are informed by the Chief Inspector of Factories that he did not check any of the figures supplied to him by the managers. It appears that in some instances at least they are very wide of the actual facts ?—He simply publishes what they give him.

M-2994. Is it not desirable that there should be some check ?—Yes, there should be, because it is no good publishing statistics which are of no value.

M-2995. Is it your experience that the *maistries* accumulate money, or are they to a large extent comparatively poor men ?—The ones I have seen always look prosperous : I mean the big *maistries* and not the gang *maistries*. There are about 10 or 15 such big *maistries* in Rangoon.

M-2996. There is a proposal made by the Chief Inspector of Factories embodied in the memorandum supplied by the Government : that the factory inspector should have the power to compound offences under the Act. He explained to us that his intention was that when the factory inspector went to a factory and found an infringement of the Act, he might say to the factory owner, " You are liable to prosecution. If you pay me a fine of Rs. 15, I will take no further action and will give you an official receipt." He thought that it would save the expenses of prosecution and the consequent waste of time of the factory inspector. Are we to take it that the proposal is endorsed by Government ?—I could not say.

M-2997. *Col. Russell* : Have you put into effect the recommendations of the Reorganization Committee ?—(*Col. Jolly*) : We have put into effect some of the recommendations. We have been allowed to appoint four District Health Officers on an experimental and temporary basis for a period of two years. As regards Public Health Inspectors Government have agreed to meet half the cost of their pay in the areas in which full-time District Health Officers are appointed in return for certain rights over their appointment and dismissal. As regards the Urban Branch the main recommendation was to bring about an amendment of the Municipal Act and accordingly an amending Act was passed during the last session of the Legislative Council. As regards the Port Health Branch nothing has been done hitherto. As regards the subordinate staff, many of them have been kept on temporary employment for 10, 12 and in one case 26 years.

M-2998. Do you think that the recommendations made by the Reorganization Committee with regard to the Port Health Branch are likely to be adopted by Government in a reasonable space of time ?—I am afraid I cannot say. It depends on the Government of India.

M-2999. With regard to Health Inspectors, do you find any difficulty in getting candidates for training ?—When I started the first training class in 1923, it was composed almost entirely of Indians, but now we have something like two-thirds or three-fourths Burmans. I have now more applicants than we have places for.

M-3000. As Director of Public Health, have you any control over health conditions of Rangoon ?—None whatsoever. But if anything went seriously wrong I would report to Government and await their orders.

M-3001. Has the local Government made any contribution to the Rangoon Corporation towards the public health of Rangoon ?—I do not think they make any direct contribution. Of course there is a Government Civil Hospital and they have also agreed to build a contagious diseases hospital.

M-3002. Are there no schemes of public health for which Government grant half the cost of supervision and so on ?—Government adopt that policy to a certain extent as regards the districts, but as regards Rangoon I cannot think of any such scheme except in the case of the maternity and child welfare centres maintained by a voluntary society.

M-3003. Are we to take it that you are dissatisfied with the control of public health in Rangoon municipality ?—Yes, the health conditions of Rangoon affect the health of the whole Province and personally I am not satisfied with the arrangements made to control the conditions in Rangoon. I think there should be closer co-operation between Government and the Rangoon Corporation through the medium of the Public Health Department.

M-3004. *The Chairman* : The Officer responsible for the health of the whole Province should by one means or other have some say in the methods adopted within the municipality to control public health in the city ?—Quite so.

M-3005. I take it you would not object to a grant to the Corporation from the Provincial revenues which would justify a certain share of the control ?—Personally I would not object to such a scheme, but I do not know what the Government would think of it.

M-3006. *Col. Russell* : In the Report on Public Health of Rangoon prepared by the Health Officer in 1926, he says that the Hindu male death rate is 25, the Muhammadan male death rate is 21 and Burmese male death rate is 42. What inference would you draw from those figures ?—I think we may say that the age groups among the Hindus and Muhammadans are such that deaths are rare.

M-3007. Have you any idea how these rates compare with corresponding figures for all-India, Burma and Rangoon as a whole ?—The figures are : approximately 15 for Rangoon, 24 to 25 for the whole of Burma, and 23 for the whole of India. They show that age distribution of Rangoon is favourable to a low death rate as compared to the whole of Burma and whole of India.

M-3008. So that it would be wrong if it was said that the age distribution of Rangoon was favourable to a high death rate ?—Yes, it must be wrong.

M-3009. *Mr. Clow* : How would these figures be modified if you corrected them for age distribution ?—I have not corrected them for age distribution.

M-3010. *Col. Russell* : These figures would not change much even though you corrected them for age distribution ?—I do not think they will change much.

M-3011. What are your views with regard to the restriction of immigration into Burma?—From the health point of view I am all in favour of control of immigration. It should be effected preferably by inspection and, if necessary, detention, at the port of embarkation in India.

M-3012. *Sir Alexander Murray* : It will cover only people coming by sea ; what would you do as regards people coming by land?—The vast majority of immigrants come by sea. Of course there is a land route from Chittagong and it is quite feasible to have a quarantine there also.

M-3013. I am not talking so much of people coming from outside into Burma but of people coming from outside Rangoon into Rangoon. It is stated that at one time a large percentage of small-pox cases in Rangoon was due to land imported cases and that the incidence of small-pox and other diseases is greater outside Rangoon than in Rangoon. When you are concerned with the public health of Rangoon what is the use of controlling only persons coming by sea and having no control over persons coming by rail from the hinterland?—I do not know that the health conditions in Rangoon are so much better than the health conditions outside Rangoon.

M-3014. *Col. Russell* : It has been stated to us by the Health Officer that he was not aware that any re-vaccination was done in the province of Burma. Can you make any remark on that?—We do a very great deal. Last year, I think, our re-vaccinations must have totalled something like one-third of the total vaccinations within the province.

M-3015. *Mr. Tyabji* : But is it not a fact that people suffering from small-pox would be coming from the districts into Rangoon and spread it?—They could not spread small-pox if the Rangoon population was well vaccinated. As a matter of fact, under the 1928 Vaccination (Amendment) Act, the Corporation of Rangoon has the power, if it likes, to compulsorily re-vaccinate persons coming from other districts into Rangoon.

M-3016. *Col. Russell* : They have not done it?—I do not think that the rules they have made provide for re-vaccination of persons coming into the city except by sea.

M-3017. In any case the Health Officer's statement that you do no re-vaccination is quite wrong?—Yes.

M-3018. Have you got any suggestions to put before us as to the organization that would be required in these Indian ports for the control of emigration? Should it be a Government organization or an industrial group organization or what?—I would like to see Government control myself from the health point of view which is what I am interested in.

M-3019. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : If the organization at the Indian ports were one run by the industrialists and not by the Government, is there any reason why you should imagine that their medical examination would be any less severe than the Government one?—No.

M-3020. Would there be an advantage to industrial organizations to get sick workers?—I do not think so, but I think it is the duty of Government to attend to this sort of work.

M-3021. You are not suggesting this because there would be a difference in the medical examination?—No, certainly not.

M-3022. *Mr. Tyabji* : Would you get all people coming in put into quarantine?—No. I was speaking more especially of deck passengers. I would pass them through an inspection camp at the other end, and I would not quarantine them unless there was any necessity.

M-3023. *The Chairman* : Would you not, for instance, detain them for mass treatment of hookworm ?—If they came from a cholera infected place I should inoculate them against cholera. As regards hookworm I may say that in Burma it is not such a serious problem as it is in some other places.

M-3024. Is it not introduced ?—We get a great deal introduced ; I think most of the coolies are infected. But in Upper Burma we get a natural de-hookworming of the soil once a year and in Lower Burma where we get the soil washed clean once a year the disease is not severe. It is severe mainly in the intermediate zone cutting across Prome where meteorological conditions are suitable for hookworm.

M-3025. Is it a fact that something like 60 per cent. of the immigrants are affected by hookworm when they come ?—I have no figures, but I should estimate it higher. It is probably nearer 75 or 80 but not necessarily heavy infections.

M-3026. Since mass treatment has been invented and proved effective would it not be greatly to the advantage of the workers themselves that they should come here free from that weakening disease at the start of their work here ?—If I were organizing a camp I would go into that matter, but I do not think I would, at first, do more than treat all who had symptoms because there are a good many things one wants to do. After all mass treatment for hookworm in cases where men are possibly infected with only half a dozen worms may be an unnecessary measure.

M-3027. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : How long does it take for one to get himself cured naturally if he were residing in Upper Burma ?—Generally there is a marked improvement within about a year if in the meantime he has not been re-infected.

M-3028. *Col. Russell* : I take it you are dissatisfied with the present housing condition of the labour here in Rangoon ?—Yes. There is very much overcrowding in these coolie lodging houses.

M-3029. Have you got any practical suggestions to make with regard to improving the housing conditions of these people ?—The only suggestions I would offer are that we build more houses or arrange for building them and at the same time enforce the byelaws that we have got.

M-3030. What procedure would you recommend as regards the enforcement of byelaws ?—I would like to see a real effort made to enforce the byelaws.

M-3031. How would you do that ?—I should take a test area of a few streets containing these lodging houses and I should preferably select the time of the year after the rains were finished when there would be very little hardship. I would then rigidly enforce the byelaws and see what the effect was. As far as I know, this has never been tried.

M-3032. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : Could you do that under the existing legislation ?—We might have to tighten up the byelaws a bit and that could be done easily. As far as my recollection goes, they are fairly satisfactory to my way of thinking.

M-3033. *Sir Alexander Murray* : If you try it in one area will you not be making a difference between one ratepayer and another as far as the enforcement of byelaws are concerned ?—Yes, but if we have got to try an experiment we cannot try it without selecting some one area.

M-3034. *Col. Russell* : Your idea is that you want to try and get something done ?—Yes. If the test proves successful then I would extend my area year by year only proceeding as we had the staff available. Of course, I should carry out propaganda and educative work at the same time. I think that as we enforce the byelaws in the area the pressure would increase and we might be more likely to get something done to reduce that pressure in the way of more housing.

M-3035. *Mr. Tyabji* : In the meantime where would these people go to ?—One of two things might happen ; they might crowd into other areas, or it might be successful in reducing the excess number who came over.

M-3036. If you knock out these people from certain areas would there not be increased congestion in other areas ?—There would be if we had the same number of coolies.

M-3037. Do you think that simply because you push them out from one area the excess number would leave Burma ?—No.

M-3038. If you begin immediately putting the Act into stringent force what would happen ?—As I said, I would begin with a small area where the lodging house keepers would be compelled to admit into their lodging houses only that number for which they were licensed.

M-3039. *Mr. Cliff* : Do I understand rightly that they do sleep in the streets after the rains ?—You can see quite a number of them sleeping in the streets in preference to crowded houses.

M-3040. Does that generally mean that there is no excess ?—I would not say that. Even in the dry season I have seen myself these lodging houses crowded.

M-3041. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Would you enforce the byelaws on the lodging house owner or on the occupier ?—As far as I remember, the wording is ' owner or occupier '. If you cannot find one you get the other.

M-3042. *Mr. Tyabji* : If you turn them out where can they find room to sleep ?—If they cannot find any accommodation they may sleep in the railway station or the streets as they do now in hundreds.

M-3043. You prefer that ?—I should prefer that to their sleeping in crowded rooms.

M-3044. *Col. Russell* : You would prefer to try and produce a crisis ?—Yes. I would like the byelaws enforced in the hope, first of all, of demonstrating that they could be enforced, and secondly, in the hope of producing an impasse or a crisis which would lead to something being done.

M-3045. *The Chairman* : The overcrowding is so profitable to either the tenant or the owner that a very heavy fine would be needed to be at all effective, possibly with the alternative of imprisonment ?—Yes, I would certainly have it if we could not do without it. I think the present conditions have got to be ended at the earliest possible moment.

M-3046. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : Would you consider sleeping out of the stations or in the streets would make the death rate of the coolies higher than sleeping in these congested lodging houses ?—I think that during the dry season, which is the period when I propose that a beginning should be made, it would not have much effect on the death rate.

M-3047. *Col. Russell* : Have you got any suggestions to make as to possible areas near the existing crowded areas of the town, which could be used for the extension of housing for labour ?—There is an area just opposite the secretariat, and at one time there was a proposal to the Development Trust to make use of it for housing. It is Government land and is lent to the Corporation who, in the meantime, are using a part of it as a store yard. There is an area there of, I think, 4 or 5 acres on which a trial building might be put up. That is in the watered and sewerage area. Of course, there are other areas which are fairly central and which adjoin the existing watered and sewerage areas of the town which could, I think, be used. They would be very suitable if water and sewerage could be extended.

M-3048. *The Chairman* : Are you familiar with the jail premises ?—Yes, from outside.

M-4049. Have you never been in ?—I have gone through it several times.

M-3050. Is that a site which is suitable in your opinion ?—I think it would be a very suitable place if the jail could be removed from there. The matter has been discussed for a number of years, and I do not know exactly where the matter stands now. But I think the question of finance has something to do with it.

M-3051. You would think that was good from the health point of view because it is in the watered and sewerage area ?—It is not in the watered and sewerage area, but it is just adjoining the area. The jail have their own tube well for water supply.

M-3052. Surely it is in the sewerage area ?—No.

M-3053. *Col. Russell* : You would not insist on sewerage being a necessity if you wanted to get houses built soon ?—No, but I think it will make a difference. As a matter of fact it is fairly near the sewerage area.

M-3054. It has been suggested to us that the Ahlone area might also be included. Is that a suitable area ?—Yes, if we can get better water supply. Of course, it is fairly near the watered and sewerage area, but I think it is little bit far off for coolies working at the docks.

M-3055. *Mr. Tyabji* : Would that area be not satisfactory ? It has just been filled up with sand and you can sink tube wells ; it is an expansive land which is absolutely unused now ?—I am not sure whether it has been reclaimed sufficiently long or sufficiently well settled to be built upon.

M-3056. Of course, that is a question that has to be decided by engineers ?—There is also an asylum where we housed something like 7,000 coolies during the riot. I suggested to the Corporation to make use of it now to house 2,000 of their sweepers.

M-3057. *Col. Russell* : Do you consider that the hospital accommodation in Rangoon is sufficient ?—I would not say it is sufficient according to the ordinary European standard. If you add all the beds together, including those at the jail hospital, mental hospital and maternity shelters, the total would come to 2,363 which, I would not say, is sufficient.

M-3058. *Si. Victor Sassoon* : Would it be possible to increase the accommodation of the present hospital without very great capital cost ?—It would be possible, but the question of cost depends entirely on the scale

on which we are going to run the hospital. We have here the Ramakrishna Mission hospital which is run very cheaply and we have a Government General Hospital which is run, of course, very much more expensively.

M-3059. *Col. Russell* : If you could have cheaper hospitals in an area it would be useful for the labouring population ?—I can give my personal view. I certainly think it would be useful.

M-3060. On the question of tuberculosis brought about as a result of these housing conditions, a suggestion has been made that there ought to be a sanatorium. It seems to me that the building of a sanatorium would not be enough. Can you give your views on this question ?—It would only be scratching the outside of the problem. Before we can hope to get definite results we have to go into the fundamental causes of overcrowding. The next thing is the development of dispensaries.

M-3061. And publicity ?—Yes, propaganda.

M-3062. I see from the table that you have handed in that for the last year only 2,870 births were attended by midwives in the two hospitals out of a total for the town of 8,265. So that about 2/3 of the births are still being attended by outside midwives. I suppose that most of these cases are really being attended by unqualified midwives ?—I could not give the number ; I think the Inspector General of Civil Hospitals could. We have a certain number of qualified midwives practising but a big number are unqualified.

M-3063. So that the Act is really a dead letter, although it applies to a restricted area in Rangoon. If you have a restricted area in the city naturally the unqualified midwives will live round about the boundaries of that area ?—I think an unqualified midwife is forbidden to attend cases in that area.

M-3064. How are you going to check that ?—You have to be on the look out and report such cases.

M-3065. *Mr. Cliff* : Can we be sure that the Act is not widely applied ?—Yes.

M-3066. *Col. Russell* : The Engineer to the Corporation said that the water supply now allowed was about 60 gallons per head per day. Does that seem to you to be a large amount or a small amount in the present circumstances ?—I think it is an unnecessarily large amount if we exercise proper economy.

M-3067. So that you could use the balance of the saved water for additional areas ?—Yes.

M-3068. *Mr. Tait* : What is the average per head in Bombay, Calcutta and Madras ?—I have not got the figures with me. But I may tell you that the actual water supply scheme that was in force in Hongkong two years ago was 18—25 gallons. When I asked them whether it was sufficient they said that when they had 18 they were a bit short but if they had 25 they did very well. This is a place which has approximately the same population and climatic conditions as Rangoon. In England, I think, the average is 35 gallons. At present there is a great deal of waste going on here.

M-3069. *Col. Russell* : Does this 60 gallons per head apply to the whole population of Rangoon or only to a certain area which is supplied with pipe water ?—I think only to the area supplied.

M-3070. *Mr. Cliff* : Can you tell us what proportion of the population is supplied with water ?—I cannot say off-hand.

M-3071. *Sir Alexander Murray* : How many tube wells are there ?—There is a very large number.

M-3072. How many people sell water from the tube wells ?—The shipping is supplied with tube well water by one firm. The owner of a tube well at Golden Valley has made arrangements with the houses there for selling water, but I do not think I have seen anything in the nature of hawking. It is done on a large scale.

M-3073. I quite see that. But can you tell us how many people in all would be selling tube well water ?—I am afraid I cannot give the number.

M-3074. *Col. Russell* : It has been suggested by the Health Officer that a considerable amount of disease in Rangoon is due to the badness of water and he refers particularly to the dangers to the water supply from the new Cantonment ?—I do not think that the new Cantonment which has now come into existence since the Health Officer's report was written adds materially in any way to the dangers. I do not think there is any danger to speak of from the new Cantonment because the water supply is beyond it and the catchment area is well protected.

M-3075. The Commission visited the area of Yenangyaung and found there that one area was under the control of the Burmah Oil Company, another was under the control of the Yenangyaung Municipality, and there were other villages in the oil field area which were under the control of the District Council. Taking a compact area such as exists at present and where you have got three parties, namely, the Burmah Oil Company, the Municipality of Yenangyaung and the District Council, what suggestions have you got to make for co-ordination of its public health policy ?—You could follow the example of Asansol in Bengal by combining these different organizations and forming a board of health.

M-3076. On the board of health you will have, I suppose, representatives of all these three bodies ?—Yes. I think it is a possibility. I cannot think of any very serious obstacles or anything illegal about it that it could not be done.

M-3077. Do you suggest that a similar body is necessary at Namtu for the control of areas like Panghai ?—I do not think there is the same problem in Namtu that there is in Yenangyaung. You have not got there three different local bodies. Panghai village is to all intents and purposes under the same medical control. I would not say there was any necessity for it at present.

M-3078. Have you any statistics dealing with the question of industrial disease ?—Lead poisoning is the only industrial disease which has come to my notice in Burma particularly.

M-3079. Have you any officer in your office who could advise or help the Namtu authorities in regard to the prevention of lead poisoning cases, or have you done anything in that connection at all ?—The present position is that the Director of Public Health is supposed to inspect Namtu once a year, and we have also arranged for the District Health Officer, Northern Shan States, whose headquarters are at Lashio, to inspect from time to time ; he usually inspects twice or thrice a year.

M-3080. But no special attention has been paid to the question of the control of lead poisoning cases ?—It was mainly with a view to lead poisoning that I made this suggestion to Government of which they did not approve.

M-3081. Have you ever heard of any cases of dermatitis reported from the oil fields ?—A. few ; we have no information of many cases.

M-3082. There are no other industrial diseases of which you know in Burma ?—Nothing of any importance that I know of.

M-3083. Have you got a malariologist in the Public Health Department ?—We have a malaria bureau in my department which does malaria surveys. The policy has been that I select the areas for survey and send out a party to survey them. Then generally I have arranged for a local committee to meet consisting of the engineers, the medical men and the Local Government officials such as the Deputy Commissioner and so on. If there are any industrial interests, we get them in too. We draw up a line of policy and carry it out. We have done a number of surveys and got a lot of work going on in various parts of the Province now, which is giving us very good results.

M-3084. Has there been any consultation between the Chief Medical Officer of the Burma Railways and yourself with regard to malaria ?—Yes, we are carrying out a joint scheme at the present moment at a place called Shwenyaung which is the terminus of the Burma Railways in the Southern Shan States.

M-3085. But there is no compulsion on the part of the railway to consult you ?—No, there is no compulsion ; the question of borrow pits and so on has been a thorny question for many years.

M-3086. *Mr. Cliff* : At the time that piece of line was laid was there any co-operation between your Department and the Railway Medical Officer ?—No, not as regards malaria. In fact we drew the attention of the railway to the fact that it was a malarious spot, but unfortunately they were committed then to a railway station.

M-3087. *Col. Russell* : We have been told that conservancy was not necessary in the jungle ; do you agree with that ?—No, I am afraid I cannot agree with that.

M-3088. You have various rules published in Appendix 12 of the Public Works Code ?—Yes. They were drawn up a good many years ago by my department.

M-3089. Is there co-operation between the Public Works Department and your department, and do you have any supervision over construction works ?—When we know of their existence and when we are asked to advise we do so ; for instance, the P. W. D. asked our advice on a big irrigation dam works.

M-3090. Do you mean to say there is no actual Government order insisting on the Public Works Department consulting you when they are starting a new construction work ?—I do not know of any special order laying it down. It may be in the P. W. D. rules. But I think the thing is so obvious. It may be neglected in cases. I think there have been occasions in which we have not been consulted ; but it is obvious that you must have sanitation on big works, and on that we certainly ought to be consulted.

M-3091. *The Chairman* : You would be in favour of a statutory provision that in all cases the Health Department should be consulted before the establishment of a large works ?—Unquestionably, if a statutory provision is necessary ; there should be a departmental order to that effect.

M-3092. *Col. Russell* : Col. Owens mentions as many as 300 deaths from starvation every year in Rangoon City ; are those cases actually of starvation and not really pathological ?—I have discussed it with him on several occasions ; it has been given a good deal of publicity lately. In a number of those cases it seems likely that starvation followed on certain diseases. If a man has dysentery he cannot eat a full meal. (*Mr. Page*) : I have had these figures analysed for the past three years ; it appeared that 444 had actually died of starvation in three years ; those were the numbers actually approved by the Police Surgeon as having died of starvation pure and simple.

M-3093. *The Chairman* : Mr. Havelock, Excise Commissioner for Rangoon, can perhaps answer a question I put earlier. We have been told that the opinion of the advisory committee of the Corporation with regard to the situation of liquor shops is disregarded by your department ?—(*Mr. Havelock*) : It is not disregarded ; the advice they have offered hitherto has been impracticable ; we have not been able to carry out what they want.

M-3094. Is it the policy of your department to put down as many liquor shops as correspond with the consuming needs of the people ?—Yes.\*

M-3095. To get the largest revenue possible for your department ?—Not necessarily ; we provide shops for as many consumers as possible.

M-3096. You do not have regard to any moral or temperance question at all ?—No, I do not think that is of much importance.

M-3097. As much as people will drink you aim at supplying ?—We have restrictions of course ; we limit the quantity of liquor a man may purchase at a time.

M-3098. Is each individual ticketed ?—No, but the licensee is debarred from selling more than a prescribed quantity.

M-3099. How can he tell ?—There are officers to enforce these rules.

M-3100. In your opinion is it enforced ?—Yes, I think so to a great extent.

M-3101. What would they allow me to have if I lived in one of these places ?—It would depend on the liquor you required ; the quantity varies.

M-3102. Who would be the judge of that ?—We have different kinds of liquor and the quantity the licensees are permitted to sell varies. The purchaser is permitted to buy 4 quarts of country liquor.

M-3103. Is that per diem ?—At each purchase.

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\**Note.*—*Mr. Havelock*, subsequently furnished the following note in modification of his answers :

The Excise Policy is based on the following considerations :—

(i) that an extension of the habit of drinking among Indian population is to be discouraged ;

(ii) that the tax on spirits and liquors should be as high as possible without giving rise to illicit methods of making and selling liquor.

Subject to the above considerations, as large a revenue as possible should be raised from a small consumption of intoxicating liquors.

M-3104. I suppose he can purchase several times a day ?—Yes, there is nothing to prevent him from doing that. But he would be liable to prosecution if found in possession of more than the prescribed limit, i.e., more than he is allowed to purchase at a single transaction.

M-3105. Would a man who was fond of whisky be able to get a bottle of whisky six times a day ?—There are no restrictions on the sale of whisky ; I am talking of country liquor. The consumption of foreign liquor is confined mainly to Europeans and Anglo-Indians.

M-3106. And they are not restricted ?—There are certain restrictions, but they are not so rigid.

M-3107. During what hours are these liquor shops open ?—They open at sunrise and close at 9 P.M.

M-3108. Then the policy of your department I take it from what you have said does not aim at any restriction of the consumption by diminishing the number of liquor shops ?—We have an annual proposal which goes before the Excise Advisory Committee.

M-3109. But we have been told you do not follow the opinion of the Excise Advisory Committee ?—They have made certain proposals which have not been practicable and they have refused to function because we have not accepted those proposals.

M-3110. In what way were their proposals impracticable ?—I cannot tell you off-hand without referring to previous records.

M-3111. The fact remains that this system seems to have broken down ?—In Rangoon it has.

M-3112. *Mr. Tyabji* : And in Moulmein and several other places ?—I am not sure about Moulmein or places in the district.

M-3113. *Sir Alexander Murray* : If an employer or other responsible party took exception to a liquor shop being too near his workmen's houses, and wrote to you, what notice would you take of their complaint ?—Provided the site complies with our rules and regulations, we do not as a rule take notice of it. In a town like this if we took notice of every complaint, there would be no sites left for liquor shops. The only prohibition we place on a site is that they must not be near a place of worship, a school, bazar and so forth ; but we cannot very well accept objections from one or two private individuals. It has not been uncommon in Rangoon for individuals to object to the sites of liquor shops in order to blackmail licensees.

M-3114. *Mr. Cliff* : Is there much sale of liquor in the early morning ?—There is more sale in the evenings I think. I do not think there is much consumption in the morning because most people are away at their work then.

M-3115. Would there be any hardship in the facilities for obtaining liquor being restricted in the morning ?—No, I do not think so.

M-3116. How do you determine when it is necessary to open new facilities for the sale of drink ?—We consult local opinion.

M-3117. *The Chairman* : Is that by a ballot, or how ?—No ; there is a notice as a rule sent round and we go by any objections that may be raised. I refer here to non-municipal towns and to villages.

M-3118. *Mr. Cliff* : Is that a notice sent to all the inhabitants in an area where you propose to open a liquor shop ?—No, a notice is generally put up in some conspicuous part of the village or town.

M-3119. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : But I understand you to say you take no notice of any private objections ?—Oh yes, we do ; we do not take notice of objections from one or two individuals.

M-3120. *Mr. Cliff* : Have you opened a new shop this year ?—Not in Rangoon.

M-3121. Did you open one last year ?—It is hard to say off-hand.

M-3122. Are you limited to Rangoon or are you Excise Commissioner just for the City of Rangoon ?—No.

M-3123. Can you tell us the amount of opinion and excise revenue for Rangoon and for the whole of the Province for the year 1929-30 ?—

<i>Opium Revenue.</i>		<i>Excise Revenue.</i>	
	Rs.		Rs.
For the whole			
Province	42,48,395	.. ..	84,53,443
For Rangoon	3,06,168	.. ..	23,92,351

M-3124. *Mr. Clow* : Do you accept the principle of local option with regard to the opening of fresh shops ?—Yes, and with regard to the sites of existing shops.

M-3125. Supposing you were convinced that the people in a particular area wanted the existing shops closed, would you accede to objections of that kind ?—Not if their objections went against our rules.

M-3126. But when they object to the opening of a new shop, can they only object on the ground that its opening would infringe your rules, or can they object merely on the ground that they do not want it ?—They can object on the ground that they do not want it.

M-3127. But they cannot object to existing shops on the ground that they want to reduce the number of shops ?—It would have to be considered if there were objections.

M-3128. You have not received any objections to the existing number of shops ?—We have received certain objections which are not practicable ; in some places the municipality has advised the abolition of all shops in the town.

M-3129. You would not agree to that ?—No, we could not consider a proposal of that kind.

M-3130. *The Chairman* : On what principle ?—It would mean prohibition and we cannot consider prohibition at present in Burma.

M-3131. *Mr. Clow* : But the closing of liquor shops in a particular area would not prevent people from purchasing liquor outside and importing it ?—It would lead to an enormous amount of illicit distillation and smuggling from other areas.

M-3132. The mere fact that there were no liquor shops in a particular area would not make it unlawful for a man to bring in liquor from outside for his own consumption ?—No, provided he did not break existing regulations.

M-3133. *Mr. Cliff* : I should like to see the rules under which the principle of local option is applied.

*The Chairman* : Are these printed rules ?—Yes, they are embodied in the Excise Manual.

M-3134. Will you supply us with a copy ?—Yes.

M-3135. *Mr. Tyabji* : Has it not several times happened that you have taken no notice of the applications of whole streets not to have liquor shops ?—We have taken notice of reasonable objections.

M-3136. You put a shop, for instance, in the Dhoby-Line in face of the protests of the whole locality ?—I have no recollection of this. If it was done, it happened long before my time.

M-3137. Do you consider that is the meaning of local option ?—No.

M-3138. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : Is there much illicit distillation and supply of liquor in Rangoon to-day ?—Yes ; a great deal of illicit liquor is manufactured on the outskirts of Rangoon and brought into the town.

M-3139. So that in spite of the case with which liquor can be obtained lawfully, there is still an illicit supply ?—Yes.

M-3140. Is that because the illicit liquor is cheaper ?—Yes, the illicit distiller is able to undersell the shops.

M-3141. We are told by the Municipal Commissioner that it was considered that where employers did not supply housing to their work people, it should be the duty of the Provincial Government to do so ; is that agreed to by Government ? (*Mr. Nichols*) : I should say decidedly not.

M-3142. What are the views of Government on the subject ?—So far as I know, the provision of housing is a matter for private supply and not for Government interference at all.

M-3143. Do they consider the Municipality has any duty in that connection ?—I do not think it has been admitted that it has a duty. I do not say that if they wished to spend money on providing housing Government would object, but it is not laid down as a duty in the Act. Of course, housing is not part of the work of my department.

M-3144. Your department looks after the Development Trust. If one of us were to suggest that a development trust might develop the areas round or near Rangoon, it would be said that they cannot do so because there is lack of water. Whose duty is it to supply water ?—The municipalities.

M-3145. Supposing the municipality does not do it, is the development of Rangoon delayed until the municipality changes its mind ?—It is delayed at the moment because of the inadequate supply of water.

M-3146. Then nothing can be done from the point of view of Government on that ?—Until the water is produced nothing can be done.

M-3147. So that if the municipality refuses to supply water, the Development Trust cannot develop the city, and private enterprise cannot produce water except by tube well ; you come to a condition of stalemate ?—That is the position at the moment.

M-3148. And that is the policy of Government ?—No.

M-3149. Is it the policy of Government to allow such a state of things to continue ?—Speaking from the Revenue point of view, I should think decidedly not. I do not know what is the point of view of the Local Self-Government Department.

M-3150. We were told by the Municipal Commissioner that there was a water scheme which was going to produce water in 3 or 4 years ; does anybody here know anything about that ?—(*Mr. Nichols and Mr. Page*) : I do not. (*Col. Jolly*) : I have had a copy of a scheme for extension of supply to Rangoon ; it is going to be put up for consideration.

M-3151. It is merely a paper scheme ?—(*Mr. Nichols*) : Yes, so far ; it is a municipal scheme. After receiving the approval of the municipality, it will have to receive the approval of Government.

M-3152. So that there is no knowing when that scheme will actually materialize ?—There is no knowing.

M-3153. *Mr. Cliff* : Has your Department been consulted with regard to the draft Bill providing that the Development Trust should build certain rest houses and lodging houses ?—The Revenue Department is responsible to some extent for the Development Trust and was consulted about the Bill.

M-3154. Can the Development Trust take on this duty without your sanction ?—No, it is for the Revenue Department to see that the Development Trust does not take on expenditure outside the present Act, and then it is not obliged to undertake expenditure under a new Act which will lead it into difficulties.

M-3155. *Sir Alexander Murray* : In other words, your policy is obstructive and not constructive ?—To a certain extent that is correct.

M-3156. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : Which Department mothers the Bill ?—It was originally drafted by the Judicial Department, which deals with labour generally, and then revised.

M-3157. I think that Bill is now going to the Development Trust to collect its views on it : which particular Member will bring it forward as a Government Bill ?—The Judicial Department on the Home and Political side.

M-3158. You are speaking as Revenue Secretary : have you seen that Bill ?—Yes.

M-3159. Do you appreciate that the houses will be built by the Development Trust and will be so sold at a loss to private individuals as to allow those private individuals to make a profit from those houses ? Would that be an unfair way of giving the results of that scheme ?—I cannot say whether that would be the policy under the Act.

M-3160. They will build houses by means of the tax on those leaving this country, and they will pay for the difference between the cost of those houses and the price which a private individual would be prepared to pay for them, so that he can make a fair profit on the deal ?—I think that might be so.

M-3161. Do you consider that is a proper way of spending provincial revenues ?—My only interference in the matter is to see that other money is not spent on it. If money is provided for this purpose, I am to see that that money and no other is spent on that purpose.

M-3162. If the Council deliberately decides that they are going to institute taxation for this purpose, then you see that is carried out ?—Yes.

M-3163. Mr. Page, do you consider that is a proper way of dealing with the situation ?—(Mr. Page) : There has been a great deal of difference of opinion. I have attended meetings of the Development Trust in which they discussed this matter.

M-3164. We have heard of public bodies losing money for the purpose of helping labour, but have you ever heard of a case in which public money was spent so as to definitely put the profits into the hands of a rackrenting landlord ?

*Sir Alexander Murray* : Is it not the case that millions are being spent on building tenements for the working classes at home up north on the basis that is being described ?—(Mr. Nichols) : In any case, I think the present policy is rather inchoate at the moment. Various things are provided for in the Bill as matters for discussion. It has to be put before the Council and passed there.

M-3165. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : Supposing you said that if private interests built houses of a certain size and certain specifications they might be helped by Government, would that not perhaps be better than allowing a public body to build them and sell them at a loss to private individuals ?—That is provided for in the Bill. One of the objects is the provision of subsidies to private builders, and another is the building of houses by the Development Trust.

M-3166. *The Chairman* : Do I understand you quite clearly that the Government considers it has no responsibilities at all for housing in Rangoon and places the whole responsibility on the Corporation ?—It is not a matter for my Department, except so far as the land is concerned.

M-3167. *Sir Alexander Murray* : It is the case that the Development Trust owns a good deal of land in the City of Rangoon which formerly belonged to Government ?—It is vested in the Development Trust on behalf of Government.

M-3168. They own 5 to 6 square miles ?—I think it is something like that.

M-3169. So far the Development Trust have prepared the land for building, but they have not done anything in regard to the building of houses ?—No. They have been leasing this land out.

M-3170. As I read the Act constituting the Trust, they may with the sanction of Government prepare schemes for improvement and town planning ?—Yes.

M-3171. Have any schemes been submitted to you so far as you are aware ?—I do not think so. I have been only 4 months in the Revenue Department.

M-3172. The Development Trust said definitely to us that they cannot build houses except at a loss : do you know that ?—I do not know they ever considered the building of houses except chawls for the workmen.

M-3173. We have a statement from them that no scheme for erecting buildings for the accommodation of the cooly population can be run except at a heavy loss ?—I take it that is the Chairman's own view.

M-3174. The Corporation also say that no houses conforming to the building regulations can be built to give a profitable return on the capital that is necessary : have you seen that statement at all ?—No.

M-3175. Do you accept that as a fair statement of the position ?—From the fact that accommodation is so limited, it may be correct.

M-3176. The Development Trust has been acquiring and developing the land, and they own practically 25 per cent. of the ground area of the city of Rangoon. As I understand it, when they sell any land, they seem to buy more land, to keep up the quantity of land that they own ?—The land used to consist of two separate estates, the Government estate and the Trust estate. It has been combined now. The Trust estate was purchased with the idea of improving and selling it, whereas with regard to the Government estate the policy is to conserve it and not to sell it.

M-3177. If the Development Trust sells any land, it has got to buy more land ?—It has now become a Government estate to be conserved, and sales will be the exception.

M-3178. For 10 years the Development Trust has spent a great deal of money on roads and other improvements ; it holds up the land practically, so that it cannot be bought and built upon to enable workmen's houses to be built except at a loss ?—I do not think the Trust has been holding it up. So far as the Trust estate is concerned, the recent amalgamation has been caused entirely by the fact that they could not get a market for the land in Rangoon, though they would be glad to sell it.

M-3179. The Corporation and the Trust between them have to decide the standard of roads, drains and other equipment. It is natural for the Corporation to say that they want first class roads and first class drainage, as the more expensive they are the less they would have to spend on them in the near future. Therefore, they are automatically putting up the value of all the land ?—Yes.

M-3180. Does it not seem to you therefore that a certain amount of responsibility must rest on the local Government, who directly or indirectly own one quarter of the building sites in the town of Rangoon, if by that policy they are holding up the land, because the public know that if the Development Trust parts with an acre or two they have to buy another acre or two, and it is everybody's policy to keep up the value of the land ?—In the past possibly the acquisitions on behalf of the Trust estate might have affected the price of land, but now that the estate is not to be sold, it cannot have any effect on the price of land at all.

M-3181. Do you agree that the expense that has been incurred by the Development Trust on making first class roads and drains and other equipments demanded by the Corporation has so increased the value of the building sites that it is not an economic proposition to buy that land and build houses which would pay a return on the money ?—I cannot say without seeing the figures on the subject. I agree that it

has increased the value of the land, but whether it has increased it to an unreasonable extent I cannot say.

M-3182. Have you ever used the Land Acquisition Act for the purpose of acquiring land for workmen's houses or for other industrial purposes in Rangoon?—No.

M-3183. The Holland Commission in 1916 made a recommendation that where land was desired for industrial purposes or for erecting workmen's houses, the local Government should proceed to acquire that land under the Land Acquisition Act: do you know anything about it?—My impression is that the recommendation has not been given effect to; I do not remember seeing it.

M-3184. To your knowledge has any land been acquired for industrial purposes or for the building of workmen's houses?—The Burmah Oil Company's pipe line is the only instance I know. That acquisition was justified, because the pipe brings the oil down from various companies.

M-3185. *Mr. Cliff*: Is that pipe line only for the Burmah Oil Company?—Any oil of any company has to pass through this pipe.

M-3186. *Sir Alexander Murray*: Suppose here is an obviously insanitary or congested area in Rangoon, and the Corporation does not do anything special to improve directly or indirectly such an area, what power the local Government has over the Corporation to make them move in the matter?—As a matter of fact, the Development Trust has acquired reclaimed insanitary areas during the past 7 or 8 years.

M-3187. There was a letter issued by the local Government in December 1929 to all the local bodies asking them what they would recommend in the way of providing houses for immigrant labour. Do you know anything about it?—(*Mr. Page*) I do not know anything about it. (*Col. Jolly*) I have a copy of the letter here.

M-3188. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: Supposing an employer wanted a particular plot of land for the purposes of putting up workmen's dwellings, have you got any right to acquire it?—(*Mr. Nichols*) I do not think so.

M-3189. *Mr. Cliff*: Has the memorandum supplied to the Commission the approval of the local Government?—I do not know who supplied that memorandum.

M-3190. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: *Mr. Page*, did you supply it?—(*Mr. Page*) The information was compiled by various officers under the direction of the Financial Commissioner.

M-3191. *The Chairman*: It was just a compilation without any revision?—Yes.

M-3192. *Mr. Cliff*: Have Government approved this memorandum of evidence which has been submitted to the Commission?—(*Mr. Nichols*) I cannot say.

M-3193. I understand that the local Government appointed an enquiry committee in 1926 to enquire into health and sanitation in Rangoon: do you know anything about it?—I do not know.

M-3194. Included in the terms of reference of that enquiry committee was the question of housing of coolies and so on. We have been given in this Government memorandum a summary of certain of the recommendations of that committee. No. 1 is a recommendation that all employers, whether commercial bodies or public bodies, should provide their permanent labour force with suitable accommodation of an approved type. Has the Government taken any steps to give effect to the report and recommendations of the committee ?—(*Col. Jolly*) Yes, a number of the recommendations have been given effect to.

M-3195. Can you tell us whether Nos. 1, 2 and 3 are being given effect to ?—All that I can tell you is that a letter was issued from Government to the Development Trust on this question of housing, and that led to a number of proposals being put forward. There was a special committee called by the Development Trust to consider the question, which made certain recommendations to Government.

M-3196. Has the Government called the attention of employers and public bodies to that particular recommendation No. 1 ?—That I cannot say. I know of no action having been taken.

M-3197. No. 2 deals particularly with what the Rangoon Corporation should do : has that been referred to the Rangoon Corporation ?—I presume the report has been sent to the Corporation, but I do not know of any action having been taken on No. 2.

M-3198. Was any consideration given by Government as to the steps that should be taken to give effect to the report of that committee in respect of these three items ?—So far as I know, there has been no Government pronouncement on the report of the committee in the form of a resolution, which is the usual way in which these reports are dealt with.

M-3199. It does rather indicate that Government having appointed a committee and included this matter in the terms of reference do accept some responsibility for housing ?—I cannot interpret Government's views ; I can only give you my own views.

M-3200. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Mr. Nichols, I understand Burma has now a Cabinet Government : do Ministers and Members of the Executive Council meet as a Cabinet ?—(*Mr. Nichols*). In practice, they do discuss things, but the decision, I think, is the decision of the Ministry or Executive Council concerned.

M-3201. It has been known for 18 months that the Royal Commission were coming up to Burma : to your knowledge, have the Ministers or any Member of the Government attempted to meet and discuss anything connected with housing or other matters connected with labour, with a view to laying their recommendations before the Commission ?—I do not think that as a matter upon which I could disclose information. In any case I have been in the Secretariat for only 4 months now ; so I would not know.

M-3202. *Mr. Cliff* : Mr. Page, in answer to a question by the Chairman about the duties of your office you said that " Labour Commissioner " was really a title. Taking the recent strike which occurred, would it be within your province as Labour Commissioner to try and effect a settlement or in any way to use your good offices in connection with a settlement ?—(*Mr. Page*) Before a strike has occurred, not after. There

is a Government order on that subject that if necessary I should act as a mediator when any strike was brewing.

M-3203. That is if a dispute is apprehended?—Yes. That arose out of some reference from India, where they had the same problem.

M-3204. As Labour Commissioner, would it be within your province at all, taking the recent dispute as an example when they came out on strike and demanded an increase of wages, to use your good offices as Labour Commissioner?—Yes.

M-3205. Can I find out whether in this particular strike which occurred there was any approach to either party before a settlement was effected?—On my part I tried to approach one of the leaders of the coolies, Mr. Narayen Rao, to see if I could get into touch with him to do something. He gave me an evasive answer. I could not get further than that. It was known he was encouraging them to stand out for the increased wage. I tried to get into touch with him quite on my own responsibility as Labour Commissioner.

M-3206. Was there any approach to the employers?—Not by me.

M-3207. Can you express any opinion with regard to the questionnaire which was issued in respect of the reduction of hours? Can you express any opinion as to whether the hours of labour in the docks should be reduced?—I cannot.

M-3208. Can I know from the Factory Inspector or from any responsible officer of Government whether there are any views on the question of reduction of working hours?—So far as I am aware there are none at all.

M-3209. In connection with the dispute that you had here, after the stevedores had agreed to concede an increase of wages, under what powers was the Conciliation Board appointed?—I think under section 3 of the Trades Disputes Act.

M-3210. Was that because it was a dispute between the labourers and the stevedores?—It was not specifically stated in the order of Government. I took it to be a dispute between workmen and workmen: it was a dispute between *Coringhis* and Burmans.

M-3211. Was there any trade dispute between the Burman stevedore labourers and the Indian stevedore labourers?—There was a fight.

M-3212. Was there any trade dispute?—No, excepting in the sense that the Burmans wanted to be employed.

M-3213. Did the Burmans make any application to the stevedores to be employed by them?—I do not think they did. Everything was in such a state of turmoil.

M-3214. There was a state of turmoil, and I understand a committee was appointed, as you pointed out under the Trades Disputes Act, when there was no trade dispute?—The only way I could see that there was a legal basis for setting up a Conciliation Board was because it was a dispute between workmen and workmen of different nationalities.

M-3215. *Mr. Clow*: There should be an apprehension of a dispute?—There was so apprehension of a dispute.

M-3216. *Mr. Cliff* : What I understand from the records is that the strike breakers and the strikers had a fight. This fight has nothing to do with a trade dispute. As far as I understand from the record of the proceedings, this Conciliation Board was formed to give effect to a decision already taken by the Government : am I correct ?—That is practically what it amounted to ; it had been already settled more or less.

M-3217. *The Chairman* : When the decision was taken by the Government, I take it that certain private parties had been called in ?—Yes.

M-3218. They were parties supposed to be more or less representing the two contending parties. We are told that when the fifty-fifty decision was arrived at, it was in fact agreed between representatives of Burman and Indian labour : is that the case ?—The Resolution says “ Personal enquiries made by His Excellency the Governor have shown that the Burmans who were employed when the strike was on feel that they were summarily discharged on Monday morning. A concrete suggestion that has been made is that a proportion of the ships should be loaded by Burmese labour if that labour is available, the rest being loaded and unloaded by Indian labour.” That is the preliminary paragraph before the appointment of a Conciliation Board was mentioned.

M-3219. *Mr. Cliff* : I suppose the justification for the continuance of this so-called Conciliation Board at the present moment is that they were definitely appointed to carry out the details of the decision already arrived at ?—It practically amounted to that.

M-3220. Does it mean that Government were imposing a settlement on a body of men who had already obtained a settlement with their employers ? The body of men did not actually come forward. Neither the *Coringhis* nor the Burmans came forward before the Conciliation Board. The position was rather curious. I was a member of the Board which called up stevedores, captains and agents of ships and so on. The matter was discussed with them and the 50-50 basis was arrived at. But it was found that the 50-50 basis was rather wide ; it might mean 50-50 as regards ships or as regards the number of men on either side. We first discussed how we were going to work out the 50-50 basis. The difficulty was, men of both nationalities could not be put together on the same ship. If it had been possible to do it, there would have been no difficulty in working the men 50-50.

M-3221. Is this the result of the intervention of Government that a body of men came out on strike perfectly legitimately under the Trade Disputes Act and succeeded in gaining their object but have been deprived of the results of their fight by the intervention of Government ?—I do not think that is quite the right way to look at it. It was a period of great strife and tension and the Conciliation Board was formed more for the purpose of tiding over a very difficult period. I may say, strictly speaking, it was not so much a question of a trade dispute at all, but an attempt to ease the tension.

M-3222. Is it your suggestion that at a time of crisis the Government took an unusual action ?—It really amounts to that. The application of the Trade Disputes Act was, as far as I gather, only a way of legalizing the appointment of the Board.

M-3223. *Mr. Ahmed* : In your budget for a Burmese family living at Syriam, there is a deficit of income and it is balanced by a few annas and odd. How is it you have not included the remittances to dependants ? Do they not send anything home in the village to their dependants ?—It is a Burmese family and the whole family lives at Syriam.

M-3224. In your budget for “ Chittagonians-Single ” you give the total monthly expenditure as Rs. 36-5-0 out of which he makes a remittance of Rs. 10-7-2 to his dependants in the village. If it costs a single worker here as much as Rs. 26 will it not cost much more for his family of wife and some children at home ?—I cannot tell you what their expenditure will be.

M-3225. In your budget why have you not said anything about barber and soap ?—Both are included in the item “ Others ”.

M-3226. What provision have you made for letters ? Do not the Chittagonians, the Tamils and the Telugus write any letters to their people at home ?—These items are included under one or other of these general heads.

M-3227. What about shoes ?—It comes under clothing.

M-3228. *Mr. Clow* : These are only actual budgets and not ideal ones on which you constructed the cost of living ?—They are only actual budgets.

M-3229. *Mr. Ahmed* : Why have you included contributions from relatives also as a source of income ?—These are the various sources from which they obtain money. Our investigators took the actual facts.

M-3230. In estimating the value of the firewood, have you taken into account the cost of collection also ?—We have estimated the value of the wood which includes the time taken to chop it and so on, by what it sells for in the bazaar.

M-3231. In taking the amount realized from rearing livestock, have you taken into consideration the cost of gram and other cattle food necessary to rear the animals ?—It is all obtained free in the jungle. The owners let the goats feed in other people's compounds.

M-3232. *Mr. Tyabji* : What is your view with regard to the suggestion that unemployment became acute when the price of paddy fell considerably during the last two years, especially in 1928 ?—Of course the fall in the price of paddy affects unemployment, but I cannot say exactly when it became acute.

M-3233. On what lines was the resolution on unemployment in the Legislative Council opposed by Government ?—I think you know as much as I do about it. Government said that it was not a problem peculiar to Burma.

M-3234. With regard to the number of accidents in your quarries, if you did not include accidents amongst convict labour in quarries, how would you be presenting a correct picture of the number of accidents ?—I have looked into the figures and found that the number of accidents to jail labour is very small. Of course it would not be an entirely correct picture

M-3235. What was your award in the arbitration of the Printers' Association?—I have given no award. I was asked to make an enquiry into the grievances and make a report to Government.

M-3236. Is it a confidential document?—I do not think so.

M-3237. During the strike, when Burmese labour was working in the place of Indian labour, was there any sign of bad blood between the Burmese and the Indian labourers?—I saw a case reported in the papers that a Burman was assaulted. That is all I remember.

M-3238. When the strike was settled, did Indian labour in any way object to the employment of Burman labour?—Not so far as I know.

M-3239. Just after the riots when these Indian labourers were being housed and fed in different places by Indians, did not some officers of Government want to stop this feeding?—I do not know. I saw a letter repudiating such allegations.

M-3240. *The Chairman* : Mr. Swithinbank, I understand you are the Secretary to Government in the Local Self-Government Department?—*(Mr. Swithinbank)* Yes.

M-3241. Does the Provincial Government claim that it has no responsibility for any of the housing questions that have arisen in Rangoon and that they are solely within the province of the Municipality?—I am afraid the question has not come before me since I have been in the Secretariat. Public Health is divided between two secretaries in the Secretariat. We are now proposing to combine all public health subjects under one Secretary. Meanwhile, for one reason or other these questions have not come before me.

M-3242. If the position in the city of Rangoon is as bad as it has been painted to us in your own official documents, it is a menace to the health of the province. Is that too strong a suggestion?—No, I do not think so.

M-3243. Has not the Government of Burma some responsibility for the health conditions here?—Certainly it has.

M-3244. Supposing the Municipality was not carrying out its particular duties with regard to housing and health, has the local Government any power to intervene, short of supersession?—I am afraid I cannot answer that. The Rangoon Corporation has its own Act. I have never looked up the question of what specific powers Government has of interfering with the Corporation.

M-3245. Anyhow you will agree that Government has some responsibility co-ordinate with that of the City Corporation in the matter of housing, health and so on?—I should rather say that Government has a responsibility for seeing that the Corporation fulfil its responsibility.

M-3246. *Mr. Clow* : It is open to Government to take steps to relieve the housing situation if they consider that the circumstances justify that?—Yes. The normal way of taking any action is to put pressure on the local body responsible.

M-3247. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Could you give us a note telling us how many ministers' or members' departments cover the problems affecting labour as constituted in the local Government here?—Yes.

M-3248. *The Chairman* : Reference has been made in the Government memorandum to the recommendations of the special committee appointed by the local Government to enquire into public health in Rangoon. We should very much like to know in detail those recommendations and the action, if any, that has been taken or contemplated to be taken on them.

*Col. Russell* : We would like to know, in particular, what action is contemplated to be taken with regard to water supply because the chief complaint of the Rangoon Corporation is that they have no water.

*The witness* : (*Mr. Page*) I am told that the position now is that two alternative schemes, one by Mr. Mann and another by Mr. Walker, both of the Rangoon Corporation, have been sent to the local Government for criticism. (*Mr. Swithinbank*) I have just received the papers from the Corporation with a request that Government should get the advice on the scheme either from their consulting engineer or from their own Government officers.

(The witnesses withdrew.)

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**BURMA.****Thirteenth Meeting.****RANGOON.***Saturday, 8th November 1930.***PRESENT :**The Rt. Hon'ble J. H. WHITLEY (*Chairman*).

Sir VICTOR SASSOON, Bart.

Sir ALEXANDER MURRAY, Kt., C.B.E.

Mr. A. G. CLOW, C.I.E., I.C.S.

Mr. KABIR-UD-DIN AHMED,  
Bar-at-Law.

Mr. J. TAIT.

Mr. S. A. S. TYABJI.

U AYE MAUNG.

U HLA BU.

Mrs. TE TE LUCE (*Lady Assessor*).

Mr. S. LALL, I.C.S.

Mr. A. DIBDIN.

Mr. G. D. BIRLA.

Mr. JOHN CLIFF.

Lt.-Col. A. J. H. RUSSELL, C.B.E.,  
I.M.S. (*Medical Assessor*).} *Assistant Commissioners.*} *Joint Secretaries.*

Mr. J. A. CHERRY, C.I.E., Chairman, Commissioner for the Port of Rangoon, and Mr. E. J. B. JEFFERY, Traffic Manager, Port Commissioners' Office.

M-3249. *The Chairman* : Would you tell me in a few words, the constitution of the Port Commissioners ?—(*Mr. Cherry*) The Port Commissioners are constituted under a local Act. The Chairman is appointed by Government. A number of commissioners who hold office *ex-officio* are also appointed by Government. The remaining commissioners are elected by various bodies.

M-3250. Bodies concerning shipping ?—Four members are elected by the Burma Chamber of Commerce, four members by bodies representing the interests of the non-European mercantile community. Of these there are two Indian, one Burmese and one Chinese Commissioner. One Commissioner is elected by the Corporation and one by the Rangoon Trades Association. The *ex-officio* Commissioners consist of the Collector of Customs, the Agent of the Burma Railways and the Chairman of the Rangoon Development Trust. The three Commissioners appointed by Government are the Principal Officer, Marine Department and representatives of sea-going and inland shipping. There are 17 in all.

M-3251. I think we asked you earlier if you could give us figures with regard to your tonnage of exports and imports during 1929 ?—I have here a statement showing the exports of rice and timber and the balance in tons for every month of the year 1929. As regards imports I have the tonnage figures of coal and salt and the balance for every month also during 1929 :

*Sea-borne Trade of Rangoon for 1929.*

—	January.	February.	March.	April.	May.	June.	July.	August.	September.	October.	November.	December.	Total.
	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.
<i>Exports—</i>													
Rice ..	101,911	169,026	270,115	215,261	261,006	406,760	143,247	169,165	126,658	139,222	134,640	99,499	2,039,790
Timber ..	13,288	12,442	16,144	5,500	5,947	25,365	14,288	30,049	11,995	19,682	16,859	13,264	184,823
Balance ..	163,419	197,108	151,325	202,292	72,621	46,755	89,796	62,264	132,273	99,224	68,659	144,341	1,450,077
Total ..	278,618	378,576	437,584	423,053	339,664	278,880	247,331	261,478	273,926	258,128	240,358	257,094	3,674,890
<i>Imports—</i>													
Coal ..	68,756	26,138	53,676	22,805	47,905	49,866	71,160	62,799	69,172	104,003	53,602	69,817	699,701
Salt ..	9,051	4,913	11,758	5,306	1,483	2,727	15,014	6,314	1,607	7,703	10,813	5,411	82,100
Balance ..	73,931	69,368	76,281	104,702	82,506	56,720	82,629	88,103	57,003	63,475	100,142	61,732	916,592
Total ..	151,738	100,419	141,715	132,813	131,894	100,315	168,803	157,216	127,782	175,181	164,557	136,960	1,698,393

I have also a statement here showing the tonnage of exports and imports handled during 1929 by the Labour Contractors at the Commissioners' wharves and jetties.

*Tonnage of exports and imports handled during 1929 by the Labour Contractors at Commissioners' wharves and jetties.*

					Exports.	Imports.	Total.
					Tons.	Tons.	Tons.
January 1929	..	..	..	..	14,393	69,803	84,196
February 1929	..	..	..	..	16,486	58,432	74,918
March 1929	..	..	..	..	15,025	68,094	83,119
April 1929	..	..	..	..	17,372	69,602	86,974
May 1929	..	..	..	..	14,329	62,634	76,963
June 1929	..	..	..	..	17,310	55,188	72,498
July 1929	..	..	..	..	16,484	57,040	73,524
August 1929	..	..	..	..	16,303	64,284	80,587
September 1929	..	..	..	..	16,649	47,129	63,778
October 1929	..	..	..	..	17,196	51,360	68,556
November 1929	..	..	..	..	18,858	64,408	83,266
December 1929	..	..	..	..	17,911	62,809	80,720
					198,316	730,783	929,099

M-3252. With regard to labour, we have learnt the extent and nature of your contract labour. You have in addition to that a good deal of departmental labour. What is the proportion between the two?—At our workshops we employ on a daily average about 500 skilled and unskilled labourers. On roads, buildings and wharves, etc., under Civil Engineering, there is a daily average of about 400. And there are about 120 as the daily average on our sweepers' staff. All this labour is engaged, maintained on the rolls and paid individually. The service may be regarded as practically permanent employment, in that individuals serve over many years except for intervals when they go to their country during which time they are without pay. On their return, they are, if suitable, drafted into vacancies as they occur.

M-3253. In fact they do return over and over again and are re-employed?—Yes. We have within the last few years endeavoured to keep

a record of them, and many, we know, have been in our service for from 30 to 40 years. The records are wanted because we have instituted a system of payment of gratuities on retirement for long, faithful and efficient service even for these temporary labourers.

M-3254. You encourage them to come back over and over again to the same job by means of a gratuity ?—It is not only that, but the gratuity is to enable them to retire with something at the end of it all. It is only within the last few years that we have introduced this system of gratuities. That is a reward for long service.

M-3255. How do you recognize them when they come back again ?—That has been a difficulty hitherto owing to our incomplete early records, but we are hoping for and doing our best.

M-3256. We have seen in some places a system of cards or little books, and a man gets, as a right, preferential employment if he comes back again after recognized leave to his old job ?—We have not introduced that. As I said, it is only within the last few years that we have introduced records, or what we may call service books, to deal with this temporary labour. All our other labourers like the seamen have had their service books for many years, but as regards the temporary labour we have no reliable record of old service before the introduction of the new system.

M-3257. Will the service book contain a photograph as well as the finger prints ?—The question of having a photograph has not been considered, but we have the finger prints on record.

M-3258. This really is a system of recognized leave ?—We do not give these labourers any leave.

M-3259. I do not mean leave with pay. I mean that if they go home for 3 years and come back. We are anxious that recognized leave should be separated from absenteeism or anything of that kind ; it adds to the self-respect surely of a worker if he applies for 3 months' leave and it is granted and if he knows that if he does not overstay he will have preference ?—I do not think we have gone as far as that with regard to this temporary labour. They go off for as long as a year or two years sometimes.

M-3260. But everything you do in this direction would be to the benefit of the employer in that he would get back his skilled men ?—We encourage all good workers to come back and in fact, we actually do get them back.

M-3261. From what you have just told us your departmental labour in the total is greater than your contract labour ?—On the average undoubtedly, it is about 1,000 a day.

M-3262. That is the labour that you pay directly ?—Yes.

M-3263. Will you tell us what are your reasons for not making direct payments also to the other labour you contract ?—Whenever we have considered changing it the difficulties mainly by reason of the numbers required from day to day have prevented us going on with it any further. Actually the whole matter was very fully considered only last year by the Commissioners when a new contract had to be entered into. We were desirous of making a small beginning by attempting to employ departmental labour, and a proposal was put forward for the Commissioners'

consideration that they should start departmental labour for the handling of those minerals that you saw. It was necessary for us to start like that in a small way, if at all, because the Commissioners' traffic staff who would have to direct their operations have and had no experience in engaging or handling labourers of that type ; and if an experiment of running the labour departmentally was to be tried it would have to be started on a small scale. The question was before the Works Committee of the Commissioners on the 30th April of last year, and the following is recorded in the minutes :—

“ The Committee unanimously agree that it is inadvisable at the present time to introduce departmental labour in any form on the wharves and jetties, but it can be tried in the warehouses ”.

We have tried it in the warehouses where we have regular employment for a small number. They are actually only 30. We pay them Rs. 30 a month and they have constant and regular work. The main objection to employing departmental labour on the wharves was and still is the fact that one day we may want 200, the same night we may want 400, the next day 1,000 and the day after 100 ; it varies to that extent.

M-3264. As against the direct employment a contractor who has a widely spread business is able to switch off these men to other work in the way that you would not be able to do ?—That has been my experience with the contractors we have had. I have been here nearly 10 years. I came to find a labour contractor with the job since 1918 who, like the present contractor, was also a labour contractor in rice mills and other works. He could, as you say, switch his labour from one to the other where the demand was greatest, and therefore he could employ labour daily and regularly whereas, if we attempted it, on some days we should have too much and on other days far too little. To proceed with the consideration of the matter by the Commissioners, the whole case was put up the following day to the Finance Committee and this is recorded in their minutes. “ The vice-chairman (who was and still is the Agent of the Burma Railways), states that he is most strongly opposed to the introduction under existing conditions in Burma of departmental labour (that is of the type employed on the wharves), and gives it as his experience from the employment of very considerable labour forces on the Burma Railways that the system of labour supply under contract is infinitely to be preferred to departmental arrangements. Mr. Grant (who is the Chairman of the Development Trust and a Government officer in the Indian Civil Service), states that the movement for the decasualisation of labour has already had wide effect in Europe, and by legislation in parts of India, and while appreciating the peculiar position of employers of labour in Burma owing to their dependence on labour imported from India he is of opinion that at some future date the demand for the abolition of the *maistry* system will take a practical form in Burma. If, however, the Commissioners are agreed that the introduction of departmental labour is undesirable under existing conditions he suggests that that opinion should be recorded and any idea of introducing such labour in the near future should be definitely dropped. The Committee support the recommendation of the Works Committee with regard to the supply of labour on the wharves and jetties and are of the opinion that the introduction of departmental labour there is neither desirable nor feasible under existing condi-

tions." Those are the records of the Commissioners made last year when the whole question of employing departmental labour on the wharves came up. I was on leave at the time and that is why I have read them out. I entirely agree with what is recorded as regards this wharf labour.

M-3265. You are aware no doubt that allegations are made about the contract labour system and the *maistry* system. As in so many other cases probably there are good and bad points within the system. Have your Commissioners given any consideration, without abolishing the contract and without abolishing the *maistry* from his proper sphere of usefulness, to the means by which these alleged deductions and hardships on the coolie could be removed without destroying the efficiency of the system?—I do not think the Commissioners as Commissioners have ever considered that point, but we as officers have considered it, and I think generally our feeling is that the viciousness of the system is largely exaggerated. The system is not as bad as it is generally made out to be.

M-3266. Let us take that for granted for a moment. Sometimes there are systems which give rise to a good deal of suspicion and uneasiness, part of which may not be justified. Still at the same time what I am putting to you is is it possible to reform this system, retaining its business efficiency and remove these possibilities of suspicions of what in other countries would be called graft?—I should think that any system is perfectly open to improvement, but in what direction have you in mind actually? You mean alleged deductions from the pay of the coolies before they get it?

M-3267. Yes.—That could be got over. I suppose arrangements could be made to pay them direct if that is what you mean.

M-3268. I am asking you from the point of view of your business experience. Assuming for a moment that the allegations are exaggerated it is fairly obvious that there is some basis?—Have you in mind that at the end of a job a man is to be paid what he has earned without any deductions?

M-3269. Is that possible?—I have no doubt that it could be worked, but it would be more costly than the present system to the employer.

M-3270. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : How would you know that a particular man was the right man in a particular gang?—You would have to take means to identify him, presumably by giving him a token from day to day or from shift to shift even.

M-3271. You mean a colour token or a number for each gang?—I have never gone into that, but you would have to do something of that nature.

M-3272. *The Chairman* : You think it is not impracticable to devise a scheme?—Surely it would not be impracticable; but on the other hand it would cost more to the employer.

M-3273. *Mr. Clow* : How does the contractor identify his men?—I have no idea; through his *maistries* presumably. Each *maistry* has got a small number working under him; the contractor pays the *maistry*, except in the case of his permanent labourers. I suppose he or his manager would recognize upto a few hundreds, as we have to, through our time-keepers and people of that type.

M-3274. *The Chairman* : What you submit to the Commission is that the system of contract labour, where the fluctuations are great in the

demand from day to day or even almost from hour to hour, is of advantage to you as employers and also is of advantage to the worker in that by reason of the possibility of switching him from job to job he gets a larger number of days work in a month than he otherwise would do ?—Most certainly.

M-3275. At the same time you would be ready to consider any proposals, keeping the efficiency of the system from those points of view, which would remove the possibility as far as it could be done of unfair deductions from the worker by the *maistry* or the gang *maistry* ?—That would be for the contractor, would it not ? We pay the contractor on tonnage handled. He pays the *maistry* and thence the coolie himself. But you would have it that the Commissioners should come in and see if this money goes actually to the coolies employed ?

M-3276. Naturally, in the letting of your contract you take into consideration the character of your contractor and therefore in all probability the kind of way in which he will deal with the labour, and it is your interest, even through a contractor, that your labour should be well handled, well organized and justly treated. You would recognize that as part of your duty in letting a contract, because I understand that in your recent change you did not let the contract to the lowest bidder. In fact, you eliminated two bidders in favour of the third lowest because you had most confidence in him ?—That is so.

M-3277. That shows that you do look at it from a broad point of view ?  
Yes.

M-3278. We understood that your contract made last year was for only two years ?—That is so.

M-3279. Is there some special reason for making it so short ?—The last contractor started in 1918, and it was an annual contract which was being renewed year after year until last year. The present contractor might possibly be dealt with in the same way.

M-3280. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : In practice, there is continuity ?—  
Yes.

M-3281. *Mr. Cliff* : You said that you employ contract labour because it is more convenient ?—Yes, on the wharves.

M-3282. Take the statement with regard to the tonnage of exports and imports handled on the wharves and jetties. Would you suggest that there is any port in the world that has less variation in the monthly tonnage than you have ?—No, it is very regular.

M-3283. This statement appears to me to render it comparatively easy for you to employ labour direct ?—That is not our experience. This is a queer port. On Monday morning we get a large number of arrivals. On Friday we get a large number of departures. The wharves will have, I do not say every week but generally on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays, six ships along side while on other days they may not have any.

M-3284. Even then that does not make it any more difficult for you to deal with the labour direct, does it ? You simply pay the labour contractor ; you really are a stevedore ?—Stevedores are different altogether. This labour is only concerned with cargo on the wharves.

M-3285. You make payment to the labour contractor and do nothing more than that ?—That is so.

M-3286. I cannot see what is your difficulty in really handling cargo. It seems to me that the view of the Finance Committee that contract labour is infinitely better than departmental labour is expressed in rather unusual language ?—I have already told you that I was quoting from the minutes as drafted.

M-3287. I put it to you that it is extravagant language ?—It is a fact that from our point of view on the wharves and jetties contractor labour is infinitely to be preferred.

M-3288. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : From the workmen's point of view is it also better ?—I agreed with the Chairman that from the point of view put forward by him it probably was preferable from the worker's point of view, because he was likely to be switched off on to another job and to get more regular work.

M-3289. *Mr. Cliff* : According to your labour contractor, he employs I think 16 gangs regularly on your work ?—That is about it, yes.

M-3290. What is the difficulty in your handling those 16 gangs ?—There would not be any difficulty.

M-3291. *The Chairman* : It is with regard to the margin I suppose that the difficulty arises ?—Yes ; some days it is down to 200 ; sometimes he would barely have employment for those 16 gangs. This has been the most convenient from the employer's point of view, and that is one of the reasons why we have not wanted to change ; the contractor hitherto has been extraordinarily efficient ; his labour as far as we know and as far as we can see has always been well treated. We have had examples of this in the only two strikes we have ever experienced here : last year and in 1924 : in both cases the labour contractor's men never went out on strike, and as long as we could afford them protection and look after them they worked all the way through.

M-3292. *Mr. Cliff* : I understand, the contractor has a certain number of gangs to whom he pays Rs. 37 a month, and they are prepared to labour all the days in the calendar month for Rs. 37 ; he says that his casual labour average 20 days a month, which makes their earnings Rs. 35 a month. Will you explain to me how he gets any men in his permanent gangs ?—I would rather not attempt to.

M-3293. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : Is not there a possible answer to that that the permanent men are employed month after month while the casual labour need not be the same men each month ?

*The Chairman* : That is what the contractor himself told us, that what he calls his permanent men were paid work or play.

M-3294. *Mr. Cliff* : You have said that your other labour is practically permanent ; then why cannot you have men on a permanent roster ?—They are more or less, from day to day when they are here. They are on the roster all the time they are in Rangoon ; they only go off the roster when they go to their country.

M-3295. If they go away, is it not possible for the Port Commission to arrange an organized system of leave ?—We have it in the case of what we call our permanent menials, all the seamen and so on ; but it entails a

great deal of work and is not always satisfactory either from our point of view or that of the labourer. Under Government rules, which we follow in this, they are entitled to certain periods of leave throughout their service. If they overstay that leave, which they invariably do, they are liable to—and actually do if we strictly interpret the rules—lose their jobs and have to start afresh. We are now endeavouring to get all our labour of this type, and even certain of the seamen, on to what we call the temporary staff; they get exactly the same benefits but are not under the same restrictions as regards leave. What happens is that a man goes off to his country and is allowed under the rules say 6 months' leave. Invariably that is not enough for him, he wants more; the rules will not permit him to have more; he overstays his leave; he will stay away often 18 months or 2 years, or as long as his money lasts; when he wants more money he comes back.

M-3296. Are you proposing to employ any Burmese labour?—Not at the moment. We are quite ready to, and we actually do in the workshops where about 100 Burmans, mostly skilled men, are employed.

M-3297. What is your labour cost per ton of cargo handled on your wharves and jetty?—I will let you have that.

M-3298. I want to find out what you pay your labour contractor and whether there are any additional charges?—The labour contractor in respect of import cargo gets 17½ per cent. of the schedule landing charge; that is, he gets 17½ per cent. of Rs. 2-3-0 for every ton of import cargo that he handles. Every operation is subject to a specific charge. (*Hands in a statement*).

M-3299. You cannot speak of the cost of the labour which is oversee, but you can speak of the cost of the labour which is at the wharves and jetty?—Yes.

M-3300. Can you give it to us for the year 1929, the gross figure?

M-3301. *Sir Alexander Murray*: Referring to page 35 of the Administration Report for 1929-30, could you tell us what tonnage was handled for Rs. 4,69,773 last year as against the tonnage handled for Rs. 5,77,353 during the previous year?—I could, but that would not help very much, because we have got a new contractor. You could not get a correct comparison because the labour contractor now is provided with certain mechanical handling plant which we run at our cost, whereas previously the payment was made to the labour contractor who maintained it.

M-3302. *The Chairman*: Mr. Cliff wishes to have a simple figure of tonnage in relation to labour cost for the last complete year; that will be one single figure; you can give us that?—Yes.

M-3303. *Mr. Cliff*: What is the total number of your craft such as dredgers and the crews?—May I refer you to page 37 of the Establishment Schedule before you?

M-3304. Is 660 the total of crews?—Yes.

M-3305. Is all the gear that the contractor uses under your supervision?—We provide it all.

M-3306. What about the gear of ships?—That is supplied by the shipping company or the stevedore.

M-3307. Is there any outside inspection at all ?—Not as far as I am aware.

M-3308. Would you be opposed to regulations being framed under an Act providing for inspection of your gear ?—We had that point referred to us only last year ; I think it was in connection with the Workmen's Compensation Act. We suggested that we should not object but we did not want it to be under the Factory Inspector. We thought Government could safely trust a body like the Port Commissioners to carry out the requirements of any Act, but that we should not object to an inspection at any time by any official of the Government of India who came round to see that we were doing what we said we were.

M-3309. *Mr. Ahmed* : What is the lowest pay you give to the *khalasis* ?—The very lowest of all is Rs. 22 a month, but that is subject to allowances in addition which you see at the bottom of page 37 of the Establishment Schedule. A fourth class stoker gets Rs. 22, but then he is frequently entitled to what is known as a sea-going allowance if he is liable to be away from Rangoon for more than 24 hours at a time ; or he may be entitled to what we call a fire allowance because he is liable to be called out for emergencies such as fires and other things.

M-3310. The cost of living, food, for a man is from Rs. 15 to Rs. 20, is it not ?—No, I am quite sure it is not as much as that in Rangoon ; it is nothing like that.

M-3311. How much is it ?—I should think the majority of these people live on Rs. 7 to Rs. 9 a month, not more.

M-3312. And that is the cost for food ?—Yes.

M-3313. What is the cost of other necessities, supposing he wants a pair of slippers or a *dhoti* ?—We provide these people with uniform.

M-3314. Are they always in uniform ?—No, not always.

M-3315. Then what will be the cost of *dhotis* : say half a dozen a year ; will that be Rs. 24, or Rs. 4 each ?—I could not tell you.

M-3316. What will be the cost of two pairs of shoes in a year ?

*The Chairman* : Do they wear shoes ?—I do not think so.

M-3317. *Mr. Ahmed* : Do they not wear shoes in winter ?—No.

M-3318. Or even in summer when they come off the steamer do they not wear shoes ?—I could not say ; I have never seen them with shoes.

M-3319. You have told us what is the cost of food which they take in their mess ?—I said cost of living.

M-3320. I asked you the cost of food, and you said it was Rs. 7 to Rs. 9 ; you have said that is the cost of messing ?—No, I did not ; I said cost of living, and I consider, from the experience I have had, that cost of living probably includes every expense that he is likely to have in Rangoon.

M-3321. What are they ?—All these little things you talk about, these *dhotis* and slippers if he wants them.

*The Chairman* : The answer is that Rs. 7 to Rs. 9 covers the all-in cost of living.

M-3322. *Mr. Ahmed* : Can you tell us the particulars ?—No. My experience of these people is that if they are here, as the majority are, just to earn a certain amount of money, they have no desire for any luxuries. A number of my old servants of this type regularly come to me and receive at the beginning of every monsoon advances from me ; it may be Rs. 50. Their pay may be anything from Rs. 13 to Rs. 25, and they never have the slightest difficulty in repaying me at the rate of Rs. 10 a month with the utmost regularity.

M-3323. If a man receiving a salary of Rs. 18 spends Rs. 9, are there any other expenses ?—No, I should not think so.

M-3324. You have said these Chittagonians are ambitious ; if a man is ambitious does he not like to live clean and well dressed ?—They do.

M-3325. If they do not make any attempt to clothe themselves properly and put on shoes, what do you mean by ambitious ?—These Chittagonians live on board the craft, in the first place ; they are provided with a uniform which they wear on all official occasions.

M-3326. When they are at work ?—Yes, and when they are not at work they have a rag round them and squat about ; their expenditure they are efficient.

M-3327. You say it is not considered that there are any steps which can be taken which would greatly improve their efficiency ?—No, because they are efficient.

M-3328. And you pay them you say an average of Rs. 22 ?—No, that is the lowest class of stoker ; they have the opportunity of working right up to serangs and engineers, and they do so. They can rise up to be an inland master and he gets up to Rs. 150.

M-3329. They work from morning till evening ?—No, between sunrise and sunset.

M-3330. They also work on Sundays ?—But, as the statement shows, only a minimum of work is carried out on a Sunday.

M-3331. Whenever necessary they must come on call ?—Yes.

M-3332. You say it may be said that they do not exceed an average of 8 hours a day ?—Yes, that is the average which they rarely exceed.

M-3333. But when you say " it may be said ", does that mean it is your conjecture ?—Yes.

M-3334. A man working on the engine or boiler works from sunrise to sunset ?—No, between sunrise and sunset.

M-3335. He works when the steamer is plying ?—Yes.

M-3336. And the steamer plies from 6 o'clock in the morning till 9 o'clock in the evening ?—No. The work in this port is tidal ; ships come and go about high tide and the launch crews, for instance, work for perhaps 3 to 4 hours straight off ; then they may not have any more work for that day. At dead low tide there may not be a craft of ours moving.

M-3337. Do you mean to say that is so throughout the year ?—No, I say it varies from day to day ; I am giving you one specific instance.

M-3338. I am asking you generally ?—I cannot give a general answer.

M-3339. You say employees are granted leave and leave allowances in accordance with the terms of bye laws ; will you give us a copy of your bye laws ?—Certainly, I will send it to you.

M-3340. *Sir Alexander Murray* : In this statement of seaborne trade of Rangoon for 1929 loaded in the stream you have shown the exports of rice to be 2 million tons and the exports of timber 184,000 tons ; there is a balance of 1,450,000 tons. What does that balance cover ?—Mineral oil 700,000 tons, etc., etc.

M-3341. Is that exported the same as rice and timber, in the stream ?—It is taken in the stream.

M-3342. What other items are there ?—Oil cakes 50,000 tons, bran and pollard 300,000 tons, meals 70,000 tons, metals 180,000 tons and so on.

M-3343. As regards imports, unloaded in the stream, you have given us the coal and salt figures, and there is a balance of 916,000 tons. What is that balance ?—Fuel oil is one big item.

M-3344. I notice that you changed your contractor last year, and that you accepted the tender of Messrs. Thaver Brothers, being one of 26 firms that tendered. It must be very acceptable business doing Port Trust work, when you have 26 firms tendering ?—Yes ; we have the reputation of being good employers.

M-3345. Are all the 26 recognized ?—No. A large number of them are just associations with the idea of getting this contract.

M-3346. *Mr. Tait* : Is it not because it is all the year round work rather than seasonal ?—It is good regular work, and the contractor is regularly and properly paid.

M-3347. I notice that on your last year's contract you saved a lakh of rupees or roughly 20 per cent. ?—It is not an entire saving, because the old contractor had to provide all plant, but now we are providing and running all the mechanical plant such as tractors, conveyors, etc., the charge in respect of which goes against another head of account.

M-3348. *The Chairman* : The conditions of the contract were revised ?—Yes.

M-3349. *Sir Alexander Murray* : The old contract covered the period up to the 30th of June ; and the new contract from the 1st of July. Could you let us have the 1929 figures for each of the contracts instead of for the whole year ?—Yes.

M-3350. On page 36 of your annual report you say that you instituted the system of departmental labour for handling a certain proportion of the goods ?—That is a very small number.

M-3351. You point out that you saved 22 per cent. by introducing it : could you not save much more if you extended departmental labour ?—Not on the wharves, because there are large fluctuations there. These 30 departmental men are regularly employed, day in and day out.

M-3352. The fluctuations are not very large : your average imports and exports handled at the wharves taken together run between 70,000 tons and 80,000 tons ?—That is so.

M-3353. The question of over-time would be the difficulty : suppose you had departmental staff based on imports and exports of 77,000 tons a month for the wharves, you would have to arrive at a fixed number that you would employ ?—Yes.

M-3354. You would pay them at a certain rate. I take it that if you had them working over-time or for night work you would have to pay a good deal in over-time ?—We might get casual labour to fill it in : I am not saying that we can run this departmentally. Another difficulty is that not a single officer on the higher paid staff talks the language of these coolies.

M-3355. What is the total amount of your labour in the workshops and other Departments ?—It is about 1,000. The following statement will give you the information :

<i>Workshops</i>	..	..	..	..	..	..	<i>About 500 employed.</i>
Skilled labour	..	..	..	..	..	..	300
Unskilled labour	..	..	..	..	..	..	200
							500 of whom
							Indians are about 400 and
							Burmans about 100
<i>Civil Engineering—</i>							
Road, buildings, etc.	..	..	..	..	..	..	About 400 employed.
Conservancy	..	..	..	..	..	..	About 100 employed.

M-3356. On page 36 of your Annual Report for last year, you give certain percentages of sickness and leave for the traffic department. There are only 530 people, so far as I see ; 218 superior and 320 menials ?—That is on the permanent staff.

M-3357. Evidently, the superior staff shows much more sickness than the menial staff. The average sickness in the superior staff is 4.48, in the menial staff it is 3.35 and for workmen 6.64. The menials not living in as good conditions as the superior staff would be more prone to illness than the superior staff : why should the superior staff get more sickness ?

*The Chairman* : I take it that it only gives certified sickness : there may be a great deal of uncertified sickness ?—The figures relate to people who get certificates from the dispensary.

M-3358. Others go to their own doctors ?—They may or may not be ill enough to go.

M-3359. *Sir Alexander Murray* : With regard to leave the average for the superior staff is 5.50 and for menials 8.18. What does it actually mean ?—The percentage number of the staff on leave from month to month during the year. 8.18 per cent. of the menials were absent on leave throughout the year.

M-3360. In your workshops you have 500 employees, on the Civil Engineering side 400, and sweepers 120 : what proportion of that would be housed by you ?—Out of the 500 in the workshops and 400 on Civil Engineering we house only about 700. All the sweeper labour is housed.

M-3361. What is the total number of people that you house ?—About 1,000 altogether in quarters on shore.

M-3362. Will you supply us with a statement giving the total number of permanent employees under various Departments, both superior and menial staff, and the total number of these housed ?—Yes.

M-3363. Will you also send us a statement showing the total labour, including contractors' labour, under various Departments and the number of these housed ?—Yes, but we do not house any of the contractors' labour.

M-3364. In Mr. Bennison's report we see that the Port Commissioners employ over 2,250 workmen. In your figures I do not see anything approaching that number. In the Engineering Department, Mr. Bennison's report says, you are employing 1,750, whereas you are only showing about 1,000 ?—That probably includes the 660 that we employ on launches and other craft. Under the Chief Engineer labour is also employed on workshops and other craft.

M-3365. What would it cost you to build houses ?—I can give you some figures with regard to that. We have recently taken out some estimates with a view to building two-storeyed masonry barracks for coolies, with latrines, etc., and the cost for accommodating about 100 coolies is Rs. 30,000 exclusive of the land, or Rs. 300 per head.

M-3366. *The Chairman* : Are you proposing to house more ?—Yes. We have a scheme at King's Bank on the other side of the river. I have already got 200 housed over there, but we had to stop because there is no water. For the last two years we have had to provide water by water boats at a cost Rs. 32 per head per annum. We are now constructing a reservoir there, which will enable us to double the number of people to be housed immediately, at a cost of Rs. 8 per head per annum for water only.

M-3367. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Is it not possible to sink tube wells at that point ?—The Irrawaddy Flotilla Company and the Bombay Burma Trading Company have expended very large sums in trying to find water there, but they have never succeeded ; the water is brackish.

M-3368. *Mr. Clow* : Are there any available statistics of accidents to the labour employed in the port ?—Yes.

M-3369. Are they given in your administration report ?—The medical officers' returns will be the best for that. There were 71 minor accidents last year on the wharves, but no fatal accidents.

M-3370. Does that refer to all labour including the labour on ships ?—No : we have no record of that.

M-3371. Supposing an accident occurs to a man loading or unloading a ship, you are not responsible for it ?—We know nothing about it, as a rule, unless the man is brought on to our premises.

M-3372. Who is responsible for it ?—The stevedores who employ the man.

M-3373. Who is responsible for making investigations into it ?—The Port Police.

M-3374. Suppose that in loading the load from the crane falls down and kills a man, who is responsible for the investigation ?—I believe this comes under Mr. Page, the Labour Commissioner. He took up the case of four coolies poisoned in the hold of a British India ship about three months ago.

M-3375. *The Chairman* : That is from the point of view of compensation : but from the point of view of the cause of the accident, would he have anything to do with it ?—I could not tell you.

M-3376. *Mr. Clow* : Do you contemplate that you would be responsible for accidents on the ships ?—No.

M-3377. Then who would be ?—I could not tell you.

M-3378. *Mrs. Luce* : Will you be providing quarters for married labourers in your new barracks ?—No. These labourers are rarely if ever accompanied by their women folk. I have no experience of any of these labourers being accompanied by their wives.

M-3379. Supposing they bring their families with them later on, there would be no housing accommodation for them ?—We have none at present.

M-3380. You will not have any accommodation for married men in your new barracks ?—We have never considered that question yet. If there was a demand for it later on, no doubt it would be provided.

M-3381. Looking at the very congested areas in Rangoon, do you not think it is very necessary to have better housing for married labourers ?—It is very desirable, but the ordinary labourer does not bring his wife to Burma at present.

M-3382. It is a very big problem, and I think it is desirable that they should be persuaded to bring their families with them. I think they will do so if the housing accommodation is available and if they are induced to do it ?—That may be ; I do not know.

M-3383. *Mr. Tait* : On the question of strikes and lock-outs, you say that the strike of 1924 was organized by parties who were antagonistic to the labour contractors and to their *maistries*, and that the bulk of the labourers were in complete ignorance of the reason why they were on strike. Assuming that your labour force formed themselves into a union or joined a larger union, would you feel satisfied that the union would be operated solely in the interests of the workers for legitimate disputes between the workers and you as employers, or would you, from your personal experience in India and in Burma, anticipate outside influences abusing these powers ?—I think outside influences would abuse these powers.

M-3384. *Mr. Tyabji* : There was an unfortunate case in the High Court with regard to some alleged corruption on the part of the officers in the Traffic Department : since then what changes have you made to remove bribery and corruption ?—The Port Commissioners have never admitted that there was bribery and corruption.

M-3385. But the High Court upheld it ?—The Port Commissioners then appointed a special committee who examined the whole matter very

completely and issued a report in which they made it perfectly clear that in their opinion the charges were entirely unfounded.

M-3386. In view of that, have you changed any of your executive methods to remove any sources of corruption?—The Port Commissioners could not find any indication that corruption was in fact existing.

M-3387. *The Chairman* : There was some dispute between two contractors, or a contractor and a sub-contractor?—The allegations started with what, to the satisfaction of the Commissioners, were proved to be false books. The labour contractor concerned has since done six months imprisonment for putting in false books for income tax returns.

M-3388. Was that your labour contractor?—That was the previous one.

M-3389. *Mr. Tyabji* : What happened to the officers against whom the allegation was made?—Their reputations, as far as the Port Commissioners were concerned, were cleared. The Traffic Manager was given six months' pay in lieu of notice and retired to England; the Assistant Traffic Manager was given leave preparatory to retirement at his own request.

M-3390. Have not the serangs, the *khalasis*, the assistant *maistries*, etc., to stay on launches continually for 24 hours?—That is their home.

M-3391. They are given no quarters whatsoever?—Not where the launch is big enough to live on. Persons who are employed on those launches which are too small to provide living accommodation are housed at Brooking Street.

M-3392. They have to be on call day and night?—No. A certain number of them have to be on call. We have to face emergencies in the port at any moment, and a certain number of the staff are always on call.

M-3393. My information is that all of them have to be on call practically all the time?—I do not think your information is correct.

M-3394. Do they get any Sundays off?—As Sundays, probably not.

M-3395. Do they get any other holidays off?—As holidays, no; not the whole lot. The work in the port goes on day in and day out, year in and year out, and a certain number are always on call.

M-3396. Do those who are not on call get any holidays as such?—Yes. All their religious holidays are observed by them, and they get their holidays.

M-3397. Are those who have to work on religious holidays paid anything extra?—On religious holidays they are let off as far as possible. We do not pay anything extra for the people to work on holidays.

M-3398. When they work at night, do they get anything extra?—They get a regular allowance, which we call the fire allowance, of Rs. 5; it applies to all people who are liable to work out of ordinary hours. There are several hundreds of them who get it, and that is in lieu of any night special pay.

M-3399. But you have steamers working night and day: do you not have a double shift for those steamers?—We have not got night steamers. The only launch that is supposed to work night and day is one of the police launches, and we have a double crew for that. That is the only

launch which theoretically works night and day, at night and at day, not the whole night and the whole day.

M-3400. Do the crew of the launches come under the Workmen's Compensation Act ?—Not at present.

M-3401. Would you agree that they should be brought in ?—We have no objection. In fact, whenever we have an accident to any of our labourers or menials, it has been the Port Commissioners' practice, notwithstanding the limitations of the Workmen's Compensation Act, to pay them the compensation they would be entitled to under that Act ; we have had several such cases.

M-3402. Has the fire allowance been now cancelled ?—They still get it, but we have a scheme under consideration in which we are going to put all allowances on a better basis. Fire allowance is the name that we give to this allowance which pays these people for all the extra jobs at night and at other times ; it is a misnomer. We have under consideration the alteration of the designation, but there is no idea of cutting the people down.

M-3403. Why have you raised the pay limit of the provident fund from Rs. 30 to Rs. 65 a month ?—The pay limit is in fact Rs. 50 a month and in fixing that limit we have merely followed other bodies. Many employees in the past have objected to contribute to the fund. It has been found that a more satisfactory way of dealing with these menial employees is to give them a gratuity when they retire after a long faithful and efficient service.

M-3404. Is not a provident fund better than gratuity ?—I have an open mind as to whether a provident fund or gratuity is the better. We have under consideration the extension of the benefits of the provident fund. But we think that provident fund for certain of our employees and gratuity for others works satisfactorily.

M-3405. In what way is gratuity preferable to provident fund ?—When the gratuity was introduced it was preferred because there was nothing before that. Later on it is quite possible, almost probable, that a far larger number of employees will be admitted to the benefits of the provident fund.

M-3406. Why do you not allow the employees to accumulate their leave and take it when they need it ?—In these matters we follow the Government rules.

M-3407. Why do you not invariably accept medical certificates even though they happen to be countersigned by Civil Surgeons ?—We do not accept these certificates in cases where we have very good grounds for suspicion.

M-3408. You have suspicion even with regard to certificates signed by Civil Surgeons ? Would you be in favour of doing away with certificates altogether and simply grant the leave due to a man when he asks for it ? One need not necessarily be ill in order to take leave ?—There are many people who habitually take leave up to the limit which is earned, if we are prepared to grant it. It upsets records and the smooth working if employees do not return when they are due.

M-3409. Do you invariably promote men from the lower grades, or do you often bring in men from outside to fill higher posts ?—Very rarely do we bring in men from outside. All things being equal we promote men.

M-3410. Why have you kept the semaphore station salaries less than those of others ?—Presumably because the work of that staff is not worth more. The man has to sit still all day long. It is known as a very soft job.

M-3411. Do you pay a lump-sum to the contractors for workmen's compensation ?—No. We did pay something to the contractors in the first year when the Workmen's Compensation Act was passed, because the contract had been entered into previously. But whether we continued that or not, I do not remember. I would rather not commit myself without looking up the papers.

M-3412. Who pays compensation to contractors' labour ?—We specifically provide in the contract that the contractor is responsible for any payments of that sort. Presumably he provides against it in his price.

M-3413. *The Chairman* : Could you give us some details about the gratuity you pay your staff for long service ?—The gratuity is calculated on the rate of pay of the man and the number of years of service he has put in. I will send you a copy of the rules governing the grant of gratuities.

M-3414. Does it begin to operate even after three years' service ?—If he is invalided after three years' service he gets it. He does not get it until he is invalided or retires at a certain age.

M-3415. Suppose a man goes home to his country once in three years and comes back to you again over a period of 20 years, what will the gratuity amount to ?—The period spent on leave will be deducted from his total service. If he has put in an active service of 17 years he will be paid a gratuity calculated on 17 years' service. He may not get 17 months' pay, because under the rules there are three classes of employees and each class comes under slightly different rules. It is a lump-sum payment in lieu of pension.

M-3416. Is not this word " gratuity " rather a misnomer ? Usually it means something given by grace or favour and not as of right. But I understand from your statement that your employees can claim it as of right, if they comply with certain conditions ?—Yes, it is a right. I will send you a copy of the rules.

(The witnesses withdrew.)

[The Commission adjourned to Delhi.]

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